DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 124 945 CS 202 767

AUTHOR McLane, John R., Ed.
TITLE Bengal in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries. South Asia Series Occasional Paper No. 25.
INSTITUTION Michigan State Univ., East Lansing. Asian Studies Center.
PUB DATE 75
NOTE 225p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$11.37 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Asian Studies; Bengali; Drama; Language Role; *Literary Analysis; *Literary Criticism; Novels; *Social History
IDENTIFIERS Bangladesh; *Bengali Literature; India; Pakistan

ABSTRACT

The papers in this document were delivered by scholars from the United States and Canada at the ninth annual Conference on Bengal Studies in 1973. The first two papers discuss the accommodation of Indian literary forms and views of life in the Bengali novel, a foreign literary form adopted in India only in the last century and a half. The third paper analyzes Rabindranath Tagore's play, "Visarjan," while the next three papers are about the changing status of Bengali women since 1850. The seventh paper is a literary analysis of the Bengali Muslim Bardic songs of grief, the eighth paper concerns a Bengali episode which stirred up Hindu-Muslim antagonism, the ninth paper is about the role of language in the creation of Bangladesh, and the tenth paper explores possible changes in the relationship between administration and politics in Bangladesh. The last two papers concern labor and the nationalist movement, and the development of Calcutta. (JM)

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BENGAL IN THE NINETEENTH AND TWENTIETH CENTURIES

Edited by

John R. McLane

With Contributions by

Rachel Van M. Baumer
Richard P. Cronin
Mary Frances Dunham
Geraldine Forbes
Catherine Houghton
David Kopf
Eduard M. Lavalle
Shirley Lindenbaum
Colin MacAndrews
Ruta Pempe
A. T. R. Rahman
Anjishnu K. Roy

Published by

Asian Studies Center
Michigan State University
East Lansing, Michigan

South Asia Series Occasional Paper No. 25

1975

US 202 767

ASIAN STUDIES CENTER
Michigan State University

William T. Ross
Director

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INTRODUCTION

The Ninth Annual Conference on Bengal Studies met April 27-29, 1973, at the Southern Asian Institute, School of International Affairs, Columbia University, in New York City. The Conference was organized by Professor Leonard Gordon of Columbia University. Sixteen papers were delivered by scholars from the United States and Canada. Of these, twelve are reproduced in this volume.

The first two essays discuss the accommodation of Indian literary forms and views of life in the Bengali novel, a foreign literary form which was adopted in India only in the last century and a half. In her essay on the Bengali novel, Rachel Baumer explains that Indian literary traditions already possessed "well established modes and techniques" for presenting character, structure, time sequence, and mood, and these were accommodated in, and helped to shape, the Bengali novel. In adapting the novel form from an alien culture, Bengalis faced a fundamental philosophical problem. Whereas in the western novel, she argues, action, character portrayal, and structure tend to assume free choice of self-determination by the individual, in Indian literary and philosophical traditions the individual's role is predetermined by his birth, and failure to live according to the prescribed rules is likely to bring emotional and other disasters. She traces three lines of development which are related to this problem and which emerge in Bankimcandra Chatterji's novels. The first concerns the depiction of character. Individuals are generally treated as character types, with "good" people acting according to *dharma* (righteousness) and "bad" people acting without the benefit of *dharma* motivation. Often it is consistency in the character, rather than plot or character change, which holds the novel together. Second, in the Bengali novel, episodes tend to have more importance than the plot. Individual events reveal human character. Repeated individual acts in accordance with *dharma* bring harmony, aesthetic pleasure, and the possibility of higher rebirth. There is a corresponding absence of concern with "the sequential arrangement of events." Long range development is less important than accumulated individual actions. Third and finally, she argues that the novelist's treatment of the emotional response of individuals to their experience gives the Indian novel what is possibly its most singular feature. The novelist, as the epic poets before him, concentrates on producing *rasa* or a particular emotional atmosphere. Popular appreciation of novels depends upon the author's skill in evoking that atmosphere more than in plot or character development.

Ruta Pempe also discusses the integration of western and Indian literary conventions in the Bengali novel. She stresses the importance of understanding the reader's expectations and values, for without such understanding, appreciation of what the author communicates to his audience is impossible. She writes about the late Buddhadeva Bose's controversial novel, *Anyar Moddhe Eka* (Alone in the Mirror). She summarizes the plot which concerns a young widow, Kamala, who comes to Calcutta, falls in love, and lives with her bohemian artist lover. However, Kamala finds this break with her upbringing unsettling and disturbing, and she finally persuades her lover to take a position in a business firm and to marry her in orthodox fashion.

Ms. Pempe suggests that a proper evaluation of *Anyar Moddhe Eka* may be made only by considering both sets of literary traditions which it combines. The tradition of the western novel is realistic, anti-romantic, concrete, psychological, and developmental. The depiction of Kamala's love affair and mental agitation, leading to marriage and a rejection of alien concepts of personal morality and life-style, fits into that tradition. But the conclusion of the book -- the marriage -- is in the literary tradition of *rasa*, the essence or flavor which is

the aesthetic goal of literature according to theorists of Sanskrit literature. The *rasa* or flavor sought is "quietistic," contemplative, and "refinement of mood." Accordingly, the outcome tends to be predictable, the treatment of the subject is idealized and abstract rather than concrete and psychological. She shows how Buddhadeva Bose employed these two traditions to unite a relatively new literary form with existing artistic conventions.

Anjishnu Roy analyzes Rabindranath Tagore's play, *Visarjan* (Sacrifice) which elevates humanistic over ritualistic and priestly religion. He first discusses the dominant themes in the struggle between the king, the priest, and Jaising, who was raised by the priest and who is torn between his devotion to the priest, his reluctance to carry out the priest's order to kill the king, and his love for a beggar girl. Ultimately unable to cope with his inner conflict, Jaising kills himself in a self-sacrifice which unites the king, the priest, and the girl. Jaising's suicide is a genuine sacrifice, in Tagore's view, because it manifests self-less, "altruistic love" and rejects the ritualism and fanaticism of the priest. With his self-immolation, Jaising enables the king and the priest to realize "that Humanity rather than incomprehensible Being is the true object of worship."

The next three papers are about the changing status of Bengali women during the last century and a quarter. David Kopf discusses the background to the 1878 revolt within the Brahmo Samaj against the leadership of Keshub Sen. The issue which signalled the growing estrangement between the progressive and conservative wings of the Samaj was women's education and emancipation. Kopf focuses on the career of Sivanath Sastri to illustrate the split. Undoubtedly Sivanath's individual circumstances gave him a direct, personal understanding of the position of women for his father forced him to marry against his will at the age to twelve and then later forced him to take a second wife. But the works of the American social-activist Unitarian, Theodore Parker, seemed to be the decisive influence on the younger generation of progressive Brahmos. Parker's sermons and tracts on injustice to American women and slaves were translated into Bengali in the 1860s and stirred Bengali Brahmos. This influence was reinforced by two English Unitarians in Calcutta, Mary Carpenter and Annette Akroyd (who later married William H. Beveridge). Fortified by their knowledge of contemporary efforts in the United States and England to extend equal rights to women, Sivanath Sastri and progressive Brahmos took up Vidyasagar's movement to promote female education. Keshub Sen had also been a supporter of the Calcutta Bethune School for women when its aim had been to produce "the enlightened housewife." However when the English Unitarians and the progressive Brahmos sought to prepare women for careers outside the home, Keshub Sen balked and urged a less anglicized and more gradualist approach. The women's issue became the major factor dividing Brahmos in the 1870s, prior to Keshub's decision to marry his 14 year old daughter to the son of the polygamous and image-worshipping Maharaja of Cooch Behar.

Kopf demonstrates the degree to which the controversy within the Brahmo Samaj was influenced by the women's emancipation movement outside of Bengal. And he suggests the confusion in the minds of Brahmo progressives between what was

modern (rational and humane) and what was merely western (diet and dress). That confusion provided Keshub Sen's followers with a potent argument against the denationalizing tendencies of the radical Brahmos.

Whereas David Kopf's paper is concerned with Brahmo men and their foreign allies in the 19th century, Geraldine Forbes discusses 20th century Bengali women who had attended the schools the Brahmos and missionaries had opened for them. She suggests that the progressive Brahmos ultimately failed to convince orthodox society that women should be permitted to move outside the household. Rather she argues that Hindu revivalists won a degree of freedom for women by using a more traditionalist argument, by "establishing 'social service' as a legitimate way of serving God" and by winning a new respect for the spirituality of Indian women. She believes that the view that reform was consistent with ancient Indian tradition was more effective in bringing women into public life than the argument that reform was "rational" or "scientific." Thus although their participation in public affairs was a break with recent custom, on the whole they did not revolt against the roles and ideal characteristics traditionally assigned to women. She demonstrates through the lives of six prominent Bengali women in social service and nationalist activities how continuity was maintained with Indian definitions of feminity by exemplifying the feminine qualities of "compassion, sacrifice and saintliness." The new view was that seclusion and ignorance of women were phenomena of Muslim and British rule and were contrary to ancient Indian tradition. The six women are Sarojini Naidu, Basanti Das, Bina Das, Saroj Nalini Dutt, Shudha Mazumdar, and Renu Chakraborty.

In "The Value of Women," Shirley Lindenbaum combines the results of her field work in a village in Comilla district with demographic statistics for Bangladesh as a whole to show the shifts in the position of Bangladesh women during their life cycles. She suggests that the three age spans in which female mortality is unusually high are periods when families regard women as an economic burden or as of marginal value as objects of prestige. The first age span is the first five years of life when male children, as potentially greater earners, are better nourished and cared for than girls who are seen as consumers of the wealth men acquire. Mothers participate in this favoritism, knowing that they may need the son's economic support in widowhood (67% of women over age 50 are widows). The second period of high female mortality is in the child-bearing years when the demand for large numbers of male babies and poor nutrition and health care take a heavy toll. The third period in which women die at a greater rate than men is between 60-69 when the great majority of women are widows with little economic or prestige value and "when cultural protection now favours the emergent daughter-in-law."

Ms. Lindenbaum also points to a significant change in marriage transactions in her village. Dowry has been replacing bride price, indicating that there is now more value placed upon finding a proper groom than a bride. This, she suggests, "indicates a shift in the prestige system, away from one based on land, access to which was minutely regulated through the careful deployment of women," towards a system in which social position is determined by male acculation of money in commerce or the professions. Her evidence indicates little conscious

effort to limit population in Bangladesh whose population growth rate is exceeded only by the Philippines and Thailand.

Mary Frances Dunham's paper is a literary analysis of *jarigan*, the Bengali Muslim bardic songs of grief. *Jarigan* were introduced into Bengal as part of the Muharram festival and they draw many of their themes from the Shia stories of the Hasanan before the battle of Karbala (680 A.D.) and the martyrdom of Husein. However, many existing *jarigan* are not connected with Muharram or other religious themes but instead are about secular historical and social matters. They are composed in a wide range of literary forms. Varying, then, in theme and form, the unifying element in *jarigan* is the depiction of "sacrifice and suffering."

In the 19th century, *jarigan* developed into extended performances each lasting days and nights. Bards, choruses, and dancers entertained mass audiences in east Bengal, much as *kavijan* and *jatra* performers did in West Bengal. In recent decades, there has been a marked decline in the frequency and popularity of these performances.

The appendix to Ms. Dunham's paper contains five examples of *jari* verse structure and diction. The examples also convey the mournful, lamenting quality of *jarigan*. The paper is one of the first systematic efforts to analyze this important but neglected subject.

Richard P. Cronin writes about an episode in Bengali history which stirred up Hindu-Muslim antagonism: the 1905 partition of Bengal into separate Hindu and Muslim majority provinces. He analyzes the efforts of the new Government of Eastern Bengal and Assam to end what it regarded as the "class rule" of high caste Bengali Hindus in the new province after 1905. By curtailing Hindu opportunities in education and government service, the Government created new chances for Muslims, who had been proportionally under-represented, and at the same time won itself new Muslim allies. He finds that the Government efforts failed to increase significantly the percentage of Muslims employed by the Government although they expanded the Muslim share of degrees and official control over education. The Government of Eastern Bengal and Assam also tried to use government loans to Muslim cultivators to free them of supposed dependence on Hindu money-lenders. Cronin concludes that the Government's anti-Hindu policies were politically counter-productive because they alienated large numbers of Hindus who had not previously been hostile to British rule, without attracting compensatory Muslim support.

Catherine Houghton writes about the role of language in the creation of Bangladesh. After suggesting what the Bengal specialist may learn from a socio-linguistic perspective of the region, she traces the emergence of the Bengali language as a source of conflict between East and West Pakistan. She also provides a sketch of the events of 1970-71 which culminated in the separation of Bangladesh from Pakistan. Finally, she analyzes synchronically the Bengali language as the central element of Bengali political identity, as the medium for political communication, as an object of pride, and as a vehicle for characteristic Bengali cultural expression. She illustrates this analysis

vividly with personal observations and with examples from poems and essays. The Islamic emphasis, found in Ms. Dunham's paper on *jarigan*, on blood, suffering, death, and martyrdom, is also present in these examples.

A. T. R. Rahman explores possible changes in the relationship between administration and politics in Bangladesh. He foresees a growth in the influence of a political party or parties at the expense of the bureaucracy. In undivided Pakistan, the bureaucracy, often in cooperation with the army, ran the country. The Civil Service of Pakistan supplied personnel for most top positions in government and advisory bodies, and it enjoyed high salaries and job security. By contrast, key positions in Bangladesh are being filled by politicians and professionals who are not bureaucrats. Moreover, salaries and the constitutional protections of bureaucrats have been significantly reduced as the Awami League has consolidated its dominance. The Awami League and its affiliated student and labor organizations have become major avenues for gaining positions of influence and responsibility. Mr. Rahman predicts that the Bangladesh Parliament will increasingly serve to legitimize decisions already made by the Awami League. The Awami League is improving its communication with a multitude of interest groups, thereby assuming some functions exercised by parliamentary institutions where they are strong. Rather than moving towards parliamentary democracy, Mr. Rahman sees a trend towards a pattern of institution-building "that many communist countries have followed."

Eduard M. Lavalle's paper concerns a split in the labor movement during the 1928 strike against the Tata Iron and Steel Co. in Jamshedpur. Jamshedpur had had a previous strike in 1920 which led to the founding of the Labour Association whose main base was the Bengali clerical and technical staff rather than the non-Bengali manual workers. In 1928, the non-Bengali workers organized a series of strikes for better economic conditions. Lacking skills in "articulation of grievances" and negotiation, they were represented by Maneck Homi, a dismissed employee of Tata's who, in contrast to Bengali leaders of the Labour Association, did not belong to the nationalist movement. During the 1928 strike, many leaders of the Indian National Congress and the All-India Trade Union Congress visited Jamshedpur where they were confronted by a divided labor scene, with Homi and the militant Strike Committee pressing for major concessions from Tata's and the Bengali-dominated Labour Association seeking a moderate, gradualist solution. At this point Homi invited Subhas Chandra Bose to come to Jamshedpur to help the strikers. Bose arrived, persuaded the Labour Association to join the strike, and forged a short-lived alliance between the Association and Homi's Strike Committee. Bose then proceeded to negotiate a settlement with Tata's which failed to satisfy Homi and the militants. They then started a rival union, the Labour Federation. For the next decade, the Jamshedpur union movement remained divided and largely impotent during the rivalry between the militant Federation and the pro-Congress Association.

The main issue dividing them was whether the labor movement should be brought into alliance with the Indian National Congress and with "national" capitalists such as the Tatas, or whether labor should concentrate on securing maximum economic advantage in an inevitable conflict between labor and capital,

foreign or Indian. Subhas Chandra Bose's role "was to mediate contradictions between national capital and labor and not allow them to work against the formation of a nationalist bloc." Homi, on the other hand, argued that *swaraj* would have little meaning for workers and peasants if independence meant a mere substitution of Indian for British capitalists. Lavalle concludes that when labor organizations and nationalist groups combine, they do so for "mutual, but not necessarily similar, advantage." Labor is primarily seeking economic objectives while nationalists are trying to add to the diverse groups which support the independence movement. As a result, contradictions such as those of the 1928 strike often arise.

Colin MacAndrews discusses the improvements recently made in and projected for the Calcutta metropolitan region. Without trying to minimize the formidable obstacles to Calcutta's survival such as the silting up of the Hooghli River, critical shortages of transport, housing, and water, and population growth, he sees reason for hope. He regards recent planning approaches for Calcutta as an encouraging departure from earlier efforts in that the emphasis is "on working within existing conditions and in an 'Indian' way." For example, instead of demolishing bustis, the Calcutta Metropolitan Development Authority has been improving their water supply and sanitation -- an obviously humane and pragmatic approach. The CMDA and other planning organizations are also either building or preparing for a rapid transit system, new bridges over the Hooghly, a second port at Haldia, and the Farakkah Barrage to flush out the Hooghly with Ganges water. However, he concludes that ultimate success of these promising efforts to save Calcutta will depend on the economic growth of the whole eastern region and on political stability in West Bengal.

John R. McLane
Calcutta 1975

I. THE PLACE OF THE BENGALI NOVEL IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN INDIAN FICTION

Rachel Van M. Baumer
University of Hawaii

The development of the novel in India[1] provides a fascinating study of borrowing and accommodation. In this paper I shall discuss its pioneer stage of development in Bengal where circumstances of history produced the impetus to its adoption by Indian authors.

In Bengal interaction between British and Indians in the colonial context occurred in deep concentration, and intimately associated with that fact was the vigorous intellectual and artistic awakening in Bengal, particularly in Calcutta from the late eighteenth century through the first decades of the twentieth century. Out of that remarkable foment of the nineteenth century in Bengal emerged several innovations in Indian literature, not the least of which was the appearance of the novel.

It is not my purpose in this paper to describe the history of the novel in Bengal, nor to defend its role as a model for the development of the novel in other literatures of South Asia. Accounts of the appearance of the first full-fledged Bengali novels, their translations into other Indian languages, and their effects on various Indian audiences and writers can be had be reading the numerous Indian literary histories.[2] I am concerned here with the work of the early Bengali novelists in introducing and establishing a foreign literary form within the fold of their own traditions and tastes. In effecting this accommodation, they instituted certain modifications and characteristics which have become widely practised in Indian fiction whatever its language may be.

The difficulties faced by the first Bengali novelists in writing in this new form were of a greater magnitude than might be imagined. Part of the problem was historical. The novel had evolved in the West over a considerable period of time prior to its arrival in India. Its growth was accompanied by varieties of experimentation in the literary presentation of people, events and places common to every day life, or conceivably possible within the range of human experience. Bengal, and India, had no literary development parallel to this. At the end of the eighteenth century, the major forms of fiction in Bengal were the epic and the *mangal kavya* (long, narrative poems having nearly epic proportion). In this literature the affairs of gods and men intermingled on a plane of unreality. Any other formula for fiction would have been unthinkable, for, it was believed, no audience would find charm or entertainment in the contemplation of ordinary human experience.

The literature of Bengal prior to the nineteenth century had attained a great degree of sophistication with respect to techniques, conventions and aesthetic theory, aspects which, in part, had been influenced by Sanskrit literature. Presentation of character, structure, time sequence, mood, all had well established modes and techniques. As in other epic literatures, indivduals seldom appeared, but rather character types were portrayed. Structure consisted mainly of discrete episodes loosely woven together in a simple framework. Considerations of time and mood, or perhaps we might say atmosphere, were much more distinctive. The Indian cyclical view of time cast a peculiar influence on the literature, in many instances making action appear to move in concentric circles of time. The distinctly Indian theory of *rasa* molded the development of scenes and episodes of a literary work in such a way as to present a given emotion in the greatest degree of distillation and hence aesthetic appreciation.

The most formidable problem for Bengali authors in the adaptation of the novel, I believe, was a philosophic one, although it was undoubtedly not perceived at the conscious level. If it is true that the form of the novel, as well as its content, is shaped by philosphic perceptions and world view, then the extent of the difficulty in recreating the form in India is easily seen. The cause and effect relationship underlying the structure of the novel, the interdependence of character and action, are distinctly related to Western notions of free choice in self-determination, mastering one's fate, improving one's self and one's lot. Where traditional philosophic views support the belief that the individual's role in life is determined by the circumstances of his birth, that his response to each incident in life is important, not to the events of tomorrow, but to the conditions of his next existence, that duty lies in the direction of performing prescribed actions, the neglect of which is the only choice he has and that a disastrous one, -- in that context principles of cause and effect, personality development and the individual's influence on action are greatly modified.

The accommodation of the form of the novel both to the Indian literary aesthetic tradition and to the view of life that supported it was achieved only after decades of experiment and effort by a number of Bengali novelists. In this connection, the works of Kaliprasanna Simha, Pyaricand Mitra, and Bhudeb Mukherji, generally described as the first Bengali novels, cannot be considered, for as Clark point out, these writings were really "preparatory stuff, at best the novel in embryo."[3] The process of synthesis may be said to have truly begun in the works of Bankimcandra Chatterji who wrote fourteen novels during the years between 1865 and 1887.

Bankimcandra's first works were historical romances, a *genre* which lent itself well to a number of features of the literature of Indian tradition. The characters of the romances were of a type so familiar to the Bengali and Sanskrit stage, heroes and heroines, members of the nobility and wealthy classes, their servants, their priests. Furthermore, these characters could be drawn somewhat larger than life and at the same time be presented as character types. More particularly, this form with its emphasis on mood, tone, effect, gave wider scope for the traditional Indian treatment of emotion known as *rasa*.

Aspects of time sequence and relationship of the single scene or incident to the plot were difficult for the author from the beginning. Later when Bankim turned to social and political novels, characterization became much more difficult, also. A number of critics have pointed to Bankimcandra's practice of writing his novels in serialization as the source of the problem. Nevertheless, his reworking of the novels in later years for republication did not substantially change his handling of these aspects. They, in fact, became more firmly established in the *genre* as it was to develop in succeeding years.

In Bankimcandra's work we can observe the beginnings of three lines of development which have grown in refinement and artistic merit in the hands of subsequent Indian novelists. These three areas, I believe, contribute both to the distinctive quality of the Indian novel and also to the variety of aesthetic pleasure the novel, as a *genre* with great flexibility, is capable of producing.

The first area is concerned with presentation and treatment of characters. The characters in Bankimcandra's novels were drawn mostly from the upper and middle classes of Bengali society. The greater number of them can be described as character types. And character types can be said to predominate in contemporary literature as well. In introducing the characters, Bankim often followed the practice of Sir Walter Scott whose works he greatly admired; i.e., each character was brought into the action by means of an introductory paragraph or statement describing personality and appearance. From that point onward the episodes and events of his novels illustrated the characters in a specific Indian sense. "Good" characters were motivated by their sense of *dharma* (righteous duty and obligation). "Bad" characters, having denied the motivation of *dharma*, acted in ways which destroy social balance and harmony. This delineation of character gave opportunity for considerable didacticism, an ancient practice in Indian literature. These techniques of characterization were carried forward to a great extent by Rameshcandra Datta. But Tagore who was influenced by the works of Maupassant, Tolstoy and, to some extent, Poe, added another dimension to characterization; namely, the psychological study. Rabindranath's widely admired novel, *Gora*, provided an intense psychological study, yet in this and other such studies, psychological insights and illustrtions were not accompanied by personality growth or change. In Bengali novels' action, the all-important aspect of the literary work and, indeed, it may be said of life itself, reveals the man who is its instrument, but does not necessarily mold him nor does it come under his influence. Furthermore, whether in the popular psychological studies or in other types of Bengali novels, the characters are one of the two important supports of structural unity. Plot very often is not the thread which holds things together, but rather the characters who must be consistently portrayed, illustrated and understood by means of the action to which they are made to respond.

If action is important in the Bengali novel, but not the plot, where is the field of its operation? It is in the episode, or incident, or event; i.e., in the small units of experience. I have already mentioned the importance in Indian thought of the individual acts of every day life. It is only as these acts are carried out in accordance with sacred authority that two extremely

important things occur: social unity and harmony are achieved for that moment and the individual progresses on his journey toward a higher rebirth. The reflection of this view in the novel is to be found in the importance placed on the episode above the plot. The episode is the small capsule in which the fullness of human experience, responsibility, achievement is contained. The life-long, or plot-long, view is not the real view. Rather, it is the moment that is now in which the greatest importance, the irrevocable action, the highest moral attainment, the rich flavor of existence are to be perceived. Life and the literary work are viewed as consisting of the accumulation of these individual actions. They reveal character and determine the individual's future. It should be noted that in a theoretical sense, the importance of the single event tends to undermine the importance of the sequential arrangement of events in the literary work.

Illustration of character through the action of various episodes might leave the reader in a sterile and monotonous literary landscape were it not for the third distinctive characteristic of the Bengali, and Indian, novel. The centuries-old preoccupation with effective presentation of emotional experience through the agency of the literary work has brought its special gifts to the modern novel. In the truly great Bengali, and Indian, novels, the characters are not wooden puppets who carry out the action of the story with no sensation or inner response to it. To the contrary, they are deeply emotional people responding to circumstances and to action with profound feelings. So important has the portrayal of the emotional response of the characters been in past ages of Indian literature, that an elaborate set of conventions grew up in which setting, images, figures, physical sensations, all contributed to a pungent emotional atmosphere bringing the highest aesthetic pleasure to the audience, or readers. Emphasis on emotional content in Bankim's novels perhaps lent more power to his social and nationalistic arguments than to literary artistry. Rabindranath and Saratcandra, while refining the treatment of emotion, achieved more often than not sentimentalism and melodrama. In time, however, the superb Indian talent for creating an aesthetically pleasing emotional atmosphere emerged in a number of the great novels of Bengal, of which an example well known in the West is Bibhutibhusan Bandyopadhyay's *Pather Pāñcāli*. It is this aspect that I would identify as the second major unifying element of the Bengali, and Indian, novel.

The limitations of time have permitted me to speak only in the most general way of certain aspects of the Bengali, and in turn the Indian, novel worthy of much greater exploration. I have tried to indicate in brief, and perhaps over-simplified, statement, both the meaning and the elegance Indian authors have brought to the novel. In their hands it has become a form in which human personality and experience are understood, evaluated and savored in the microcosm of small events and actions. As these events, in total, reveal consistency of character and a fine balance of the full range of human emotions, artistry, unity and fulfillment are achieved in the literary work.

Footnotes

1. The development of the novel in South Asia is a nineteenth-century occurrence. For that reason reference to India alone is made throughout this paper. It should be understood, however, that the literary histories of contemporary India, Pakistan and Bangladesh share a common history in nineteenth-century India.

2. A very limited composite picture of the role of the Bengali novel in Indian literary history is presented in *The Novel in India, Its Birth and Development*, edited by T. W. Clark. See also Sukumar Sen, *History of Bengali Literature*, p. 238.

3. Clark, p. 61.

II. THE HYBRID STRUCTURE OF ÀYNĀR MODDHE ĒKÁ

BY BUDDHADEVA BOSE

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Literature, although it is created by individuals in solitude, is a form of social behavior. It is a means of communication between a writer and his readers which is based on shared notions as to what constitutes art. Both the writer and the reader have certain expectations when they are faced, for example, with a work called a "novel." Although a writer as an artist is one who creates new aesthetic objects and new styles, his achievement can only be measured in terms of the conventions which are part of the reader's and his own milieu. The conventions regarding art which guide evaluation and understanding are not necessarily explicit; they are part of the system of values which are learned through socialization in a particular culture. They include notions as to the nature of art, the role of art in society, the nature of creativity, the nature of the aesthetic experience, as well as ideas regarding particular literary genres.

Much of the criticism dealing with modern Bengali novels has assumed that they conform to the conventions of the novel as it developed in the West. Since the label "novel" was first applied to literary works by Bankimcandra Chatterjee in the 19th century, critics have judged Bengali novels on the basis of Western models. As a result there are frequent criticisms that characters have a flat, card-board quality, that they are stereotypical and psychologically shallow. Novels are found to have poor plot development and to reflect a lack of interest in personal, psychological detail. These features are perceived by critics as failures in literary facility. However, these very failures may be, given another aesthetic system, considered successes.

The history of modern Bengali literature indicates that the current aesthetic tradition is a composite one. It combines both Western-influenced and classical Indian literary conventions. This paper first summarizes the plot of the novel *Aynar Moddhe Eka*. Then it explains aspects of the composition in terms of both the Indian theory of *rasa* and the Western theory of the novel.

Among over forty novels written by Buddhadeva Bose, *Āynār Moddhe Ēkā* is one of his latest, published in 1968.[1] It is representative of the kinds of literary issues with which Buddhadeva was concerned from his earliest writing period in the 1930's.

The protagonist in *Āynār Moddhe Ēkā* is a woman called Kamala. She is a refugee widow from East Bengal, where her parents and her newly-wedded husband disappeared in refugee camps. With no one to depend upon to maintain her, she seeks out distant relatives in Calcutta who take her in as a daughter, but more so as a servant.

Numerous passages in the novel establish that traditional values and goals are deeply imbedded in Kamala's mind. Like a proper Hindu woman, she maintains a bearing of modesty and distance when Ambu, a man who is not kin, approaches her, and she reminds herself that "one must be careful with such a man." She considers living in a home for refugee girls, where although one is not happy or dignified, the life is at least proper without fear and temptations. And, in her wedding scene (a description occuring early in the novel), she savours every aspect of the ritual:

> She looked at the ring on her finger, then all around the room, how many kinds of gifts adorned the dressing table, how many colored saris hung on the dressing-rack. Even more would be added as the evening went on. All for her. Did all of them really love her so much? No, it was not love, it was custom. It was the ceremonial offering to the new bride -- her blessing. On the wedding announcement was written "We pray this exchange of formalities will be blessed." But there must be a symbol of the blessing something we can see, something we can touch, something that is not just a spoken word. Like the *sidur* [red lacquer powder], the conch bracelets, the brahmin's mantra. That is why there are all these saris, jewelry, and other gifts. Symbols are the basis of life; symbols are everything (pp. 43-44).

> All the little details, canons, customs, and rituals are very good. It is clear that something is happening, that there is an event in your life, a very big event, and that this day is different from all other days. (p. 85)

But unfortunate circumstances disrupt the normal, traditional situations which Kamala would have experienced as a Hindu wife in Dacca, and, as a result, she is introduced to activities and values foreign to her old way of life.

Most of Kamala's new experiences are associated with the urban world of Calcutta and especially activities which are considered "Westernized" or "modern." Those experiences center around her encounters with several men. For example, the evil Ambu visits her Masi's house as an excuse to see her and hopefully to catch her alone. He tells Masi detailed stories about the scandalous behavior of "modern girls" and convinces her that if Kamala worked as an actress in films, she might earn hundreds of rupees and make them all rich. He overwhelms Kamala with English words which she hardly understands:

> What is called "income tax" or "air conditioned" were not known to me even two days ago. Didn't Ambu understand that these things had no meaning for me? I

> smiled when he said that one day I too could be a "star," that my "figure" was wonderful, and that there was much "appeal" in my eyes. (p. 31)

The determinant incident with Ambu draws on a typical stereotype of Bengali "Westernized dacadence." To a Western reader, it may evoke a melodramatic scene from old silent films, but to Kamala, Buddhadeva implies, the scene is a serious first encounter with "modern immorality." Ambu takes her to a strange apartment. She describes the scene:

> The place did not look like the home of a *bhadralōk* [gentleman]. The room had a wretched, dissipated appearance -- cluttered bed against the wall, some glasses on the table, a couple of chairs here and there, empty bottles standing on the window sill. . . . He took a flask from his pocket . . . standing very close to me, he said, "Listen Kamala, it will do you no good to make a scene. You know your Masi will believe anything I tell her . . . come on, let's have a little fun." Ambu put his left arm around my waist and took a long drink from the glass. (p. 35)

Soon after this incident, Kamala meets another man, Abani, in the street, and much to her surprise she goes home with him.

Where Ambu is a blatant villain, however, Abani is a gentle, sincere, and generous artist. He offers Kamala a place to stay and inadvertently introduces her to a whole new perspective. Contrary to her expectations he maintains a platonic relationship with her initially. Also to her surprise, Abani has fincancial difficulties but refuses to take money from his widowed mother.

> Kamala asked him, "Doesn't your mother offer you money?" "Of course she offers it, but I hate to take it." "But why! Isn't your mother's money the same as yours?" "Not at all. I don't think it is right to take money from parents after the age of twenty-one." ". . . but in the end, it will all be your money. You are the only son." "Oh I get furious hearing the 'only son' business. It's terrible! Property -- interest -- father's money -- I abhor all that, you hear? I don't want to take over somebody else's savings, grovelling at his feet and yet living it up. I want to be a bohemian . . . a vagabond without a job, without any conventions, spending what I earn. A rebel against society. (p. 91)

Kamala "unconsciously, gradually adopted Abani's style, Abani's teaching," and by reading books and magazines which he supplies, "her eyes and ears were opened in many directions." Abani serves as a "fresh wind blowing through her mind;" he explains the intricacies of things like cinemas, styles of dress, and forms

of make-up. She finds it unusual that he discusses his day-to-day problems and finances with her.

Kamala is aware that her views are changing. For example, she confesses that "my concept of good and evil is rustic and old-fashioned." The fact that she is living with Abani out of wedlock raises new issues:

> So many social rules are put into our heads -- we grow up with so many ideas about good and evil. . . . I placed myself in Abani's hands. According to propriety that is not good, but is it really bad? . . . Then why do I go on blaming myself and my body -- this body on which Abani has showered caresses. Why should I blame it? (p. 79).

She begins to distinguish between public and private morality: "Who are those unknown, unseen, unnamed people in whose eyes I want to be 'good'?"(p. 74). Also moral hypocrisy: her girlfriend-turned-prostitute tells her that most of the men who seek prostitutes are middle-aged, upper-class, respectable family men. Her idea of sex roles is challenged: "This is Calcutta, everything everywhere helter-skelter. Women do all kinds of work, many even work with men on an equal footing." (p. 97) She becomes aware of the process of socialization which gave her particular values:

> Abani, I learned everything from you. You opened my eyes and gave my mind strength and confidence. I grew up under a completely different hand. There a girl had to be watched carefully after the age of eleven. If her sari *ā̤cal* slipped from her bosom for a minute it was bad, and even while sleeping, her whole body had to stay covered. . . . A woman's body was a source of evil . . . women just had to clench their teeth and suffer . . . from you I learned for the first time that there is pleasure in the body. (p. 99)

Kamala sees herself for the first time as an individual apart from society and society's moral conventions:

> For the first time, for the first time in my life, I saw myself. I saw myself in the mirror, from the hair on my head to the soles of my feet, uncovered and complete . . . after so long, I found myself, and I knew that this body is not sin. (p. 140)

But the transformation of Kamala is not complete. As the narrative of her new experiences progresses, there are more and more hints that she is not willing to give up her traditional values and perspective. When she remembers later incidents, her "objective and enlightened" observations are more often tainted with negative reservations and feelings of doubt, guilt, and disgust. For

example, her memory of posing nude as an artist's model:

> Oh Kamala, you were possessed by an unnatural, unhealthy curiousity. You suppressed the rebellion of your blood and forgot all the sacraments of your birth. That is why you are not satisfied with Abani's love. Recognition by society, establishing a family -- all this was suppressed in your mind by a new desire, from the seed planted by Abani, a greed for novelty, for a corrupt, bright, unrestrained, forbidden world. You saw its shadow the instant you stepped into the room on Sudder Street, those bright glass windows casting everywhere a soft light like the glow of morning, a carpet under your feet, the deep soft maroon-colored sofa, and that balding, middle-aged man in whose face you saw nothing unusual at first. As if you had an amazing dream and you tried to realize that dream with all your heart. (pp. 105-106)

Kamala becomes repelled by symbols of that experience: Sudder Street, glass windows, a carpet, a sofa, and an artist who paints nudes, and the feelings which she associates with that experience: unhealthy, unnatural, forbidden, corrupt. She becomes mortified by the memory of posing nude. The thought that the artist is exploiting her body -- her self -- as an inhuman object from which he paints a strange image of a female is finally intolerable. She begins to think Alok Pal, the artist, is an unnatural, despicable, and perverse man because he is *not* sexually attracted to her:

> But he, I ask you, is he made of stone? He saw me every day, three days a week, for two hours. No one in my life ever saw me in that way. No, even Abani never saw me nude with the lights on. I never even saw myself like that until now. He looks, and he paints. He paints, and looks. Nothing more. Not a thing more. And here I am helpless in this soundless, secluded studio, outside the world and outside society. (p. 141)

Reaffirming her prejudices about nudity and clothing, Kamala argues that clothing is "natural" as it distinguishes men from animals and men from each other:

> "One's clothes are his dignity" -- that is what Abani said when he saw me wearing "servant's garb" worth twelve rupees. Clothes are not only dignity, they are humanity. Animals do not wear clothes, but men do. In *jātrā* plays it is so easy to recognize who is a *rāja*, a brahmin, a general. In reality too one can tell just by looking who is a *bōṣṭami*, a *bāul*, who is a *jamidār-ginni* and who is a farmer's wife. There is nothing written on the face. All the signs are on the outer covering. They are all the evidence. Those

> signs which could be called a part of our bodies, without which we couldn't even imagine ourselves. If you take them away from a man, the man does not turn into another kind of creature. But it is as if a creature of land were thrown into the water and could no longer breathe. (p. 108).

Kamala feels guilty and "unnatural" also, not only for posing as a model, but for deceiving Abani to do it: "Lies, hypocrisy, deceit! I deceived Abani every day. Abani who is so good, so trusting, so in love with me. What am I? I have done wrong; I have sinned." (p. 129) She is afraid Abani will find out and not recognize the woman, the "good" Hindu women, with whom he lives. But like Alok Pal, Abani does not fit the aphorisms she heard as a child: "Man is to woman as tiger is to doe, as fire to butter, as eater to the eaten," or "Men are all alike, trust no man in the house of your father-in-law." She cannot assimilate these new concepts of sexual morality. Accordingly she cannot assimilate Abani's attitude toward marriage. He says, "Even though there has been no mantra read, no witnesses called, no ceremony, the way we are now -- together and one -- is better than marriage. It is more pure." (p. 82) But she finds it unbearable to remain unmarried and pressures Abani to give up his "bohemian" ideals. She begs him to give her the opportunity to be "normal" like everyone else.

> Abani is obstinate as a child. He does not want children yet. He is holding back, month after month, the day when I can be a mother. First he wants a salary, a good flat, furniture. First he wants to prove his worth to his uncle, to show him the prizes for his paintings in the newspapers. Then marriage, then children . . . the thing called "love," an idea, that keeps him engrossed, interested. As if anything will come of love! Life will go on, as if life meant nothing special. As if, to survive in the long run, a person did not need to grasp and hold to some rule or convention! (pp. 83-84)

The ideals which Kamala attributes to Abani are not "bohemian" in the sense that he does have goals, and those involve working, earning, establishing a professional reputation, and then starting a legitimate family. But from her perspective, where an only son like Abani should live with his widowed mother and his uncle, receive financial support from them, marry young, and start a family regardless of his independent economic resources, Abani appears to be a decadent rebel with no sense of propriety. Eventually, Abani is persuaded that it is best to marry Kamala in a proper ceremony, take a job in his uncle's firm as a commercial artist (and thereby betray his dedication to fine art), and rejoin his widowed mother in a joint family household. Under Kamala's pressure he submits to "rejoin" the society which he tried to escape, the society which she considers real, true, and good.

The structure of the novel focuses on the setting of Kamala's wedding to Abani. Most of the narrative is her retrospective account of events leading

to her marriage. And this narrative is broken, such that the marriage is emphasized as an immediate and separate picture before the reader. There is a division created by the author between the wedding itself and "the streets of Calcutta," between Kamala alone in serenity and Kamala in a complex and confusing network of relationships. This division contrasts one setting versus many, one character versus many, and one highly structured ceremony versus irratic and unpredictable social activity. Buddhadeva polarizes whole sets of associations and nuances which might be summarized by the following clusters:

> Female alone in ceremony, Hindu tradition, security, respectability, happiness, purity (sexual and spiritual), emotion and feeling, control and restraint, constructive, cool-headed, sane, blameless, proper marriage, many symbols and rituals, healthy, natural, passive, euphoric, real, home, the joint family and a network of kin, heavily clothed in prescribed dress.
>
> Female in relationships with a series of men, modernized, intellectual, artistic, unrealistic, romantic, bohemian, impractical, ineffectual, corrupt, confused, lustful, childish, unrestrained, intoxicated (alcohol), guilty, love relationships, unnatural, unhealthy, curious, dream-like or unreal, naked.

These thematic associations tend to polarize into positive and negative values -- a factor which could bias the reader's response in favor of the wedding descriptions and the style which they represent.

The most poignant contrast is evident in the two focal images of the novel. The first, to which the title "alone in the mirror" refers, is the picture of Kamala standing naked before the mirror in the artist's studio, seeing herself naked for the first time, about to expose her nakedness to a strange man for money, nervous, frightened, and most of all, alone, for she can never share this experience with her "husband" or the people with whom she lives. In her mind this scene is the epitome of her experience "outside" a proper Hindu life, associated with confusion, a sense of unreality, impurity, impracticality, even disease and perversion. The second image is the picture of Kamala as she sits dressed in Benarsi silk and gold jewelry, waiting to be viewed by wedding guests as a new bride in the household.

> It was a traditional Hindu wedding . . . she was seated in this room on the third floor, the new wooden cot smelling faintly of varnish, the bedcover made of new, unbleached cloth and embroidered in dark brown. The very room which would be the bridal chamber that night. Her wedding. My wedding. . . . Today I am honored and respected. Today I will become the daughter-in-law of a sub-judge. (p. 9)

The aura of the scene is filled with ritual connotations. The traditional symbols of marriage are often mentioned, such as *sidur*, conch bracelets, and the brahmin's mantra. And, although she is alone, she is waiting for people who will come to approve and accept her. She is conscious of entering a household and a new set of kin:

> "*Bowmā*" [son's wife], "*bowdi*" [elder brother's wife], "*kākimā*" [father's younger brother's wife], "*māmimā*" [mother's brother's wife]. There is a magic spell to all these names . . . as she received the gifts she thought, "I am your *pistutō jā* [father's sister's daughter], she is your *mās-śāśuri* [husband's mother]. These thoughts swam around her. Tonight she would become someone's *kākimā*, another's *nātbow* [nephew's wife]. Sitting in the midst of them, it was as if her summit spread out over the whole family, squeezing in alongside many new people, changing a little, creating a different picture of her. And in this picture, she and Abani were side by side, for this brief moment right in the middle, yet not excluding anyone either. (pp. 44-45).

She anticipates a new life with Abani, different from the time she lived with him illicitly. She says, now I can have children, we will live in a new flat, with new matching furniture, a radio in the bedroom and a refrigerator in the kitchen. Abani will go to the office from 9:30 to 5:30 and earn a salary of two and a half thousand rupees, and I will spend my afternoons thumbing through cinema magazines, sleeping, visiting with married women in the flat next door. (p. 149) With great relief she reviews the prospects of what she calls a *sattikār jībon*, a real life. That other, that "naked" and "unreal" self which she was in the streets of Calcutta is gone:

> You do not have to do anything, worry about anything. You only have to be yourself, complete. What you are is enough. You have to be true. Little by little you will become true. Sit still, let yourself relax, let this illusion take hold of you. (p. 123)

This second image is the epitome of all that Kamala has sought: security, propriety, a family, serenity, and behavior which is highly predictable and highly undemanding of her personal moral understanding and will. This, the description suggests, is a "pure" life, uncomplicated, natural, and sane. The marriage of Kamala is the symbol of retreat from an experiment with modernized ways and independence, a return to tradition.

III

The structure of *Āynār Moddhe Ēkā* operates on two levels, both contributing to the unifying symbol of the marriage. One level comprises descriptions of Kamala sitting in the midst of the wedding ritual. Here, she becomes an idealized character, the Bride. She is what could be called a flat character. The setting is filled with reference to ritual symbols of the wedding and the traditional social bonds which it represents. To the Bengali reader who is familiar with Hindu customs the scene is familiar and predictable. Buddhadeva shifts from the first-person narrative to third-person, a technique which increases aesthetic distance and adds to the reader's sense of impersonality. There is no account of action in the sense of movement or in the sense of dialogue with other characters; the time lapse is unnoticeable. Expressions in this scene such as "an event in life," "an illusion taking hold," and "real life" add to the tone of generality and abstraction. For example the passage

> Sitting in the midst of them, it was as if her summit spread out over the whole family, squeezing in alongside many new people, changing a little, creating a different picture of her. And in this picture, she and Abani were side by side, yet not excluding anyone either.

The scene is a static picture, a pose for an impersonal summation. Its dominant focus is the contemplation of the meaning of the marriage. This level of structure in the novel conforms to the mode of *rasa*, the ideal manner of literary representation according to Indian aestheticians. That is, it consists in generalized description, ideal-typical characterization, great aesthetic distance and abstraction, and a cumulative effect which is a dominant mood.

This mood of representation may be better understood be reviewing some aspects of the *rasa* theory.

Theorists of *rasa* (Ānandavardhana, 9th century; Abhinavagupta, 10th century; Viśvanātha, 14th century) believe that literature (*sāhitya*) is a special joining of *sabda* (sound, word) and *artha* (sense, meaning).[2] They characterize the essence of poetic language as the quality of resonance or suggestion, which they call *dhvani*. Every word has three potential levels of meaning: *vāchya* (expressed, discursive, denotative, literal), *lakshya* (indicated, figurative), and *vyanjanā* (suggested, resonant). In literature resonance is the most important. The highest poetry is that in which resonance or suggestion prevails over literal and figurative meaning. Whereas the latter two levels of meaning may be reduced to a discursive statement, resonance can be conveyed only be means of the literary work. Abhinavagupta contends that once *dhvani*, the "additional power" of the word in literature, is perceived, its vehicle, literal sense, is irrelevant. The perception of *dhvani* is like a "flower born of magic;" it brings an immediate detachment from literal referents. The effect of *dhvani* is a transcendence from ordinary meanings and ordinary experience.

According to theorists of *rasa*, the poetic composition is one "whose soul is *rasa*." *Rasa*, which means flavor or essence, is the unifying principle of the poetic composition. Its experience is the aim of the poetic process. The parts of a literary composition fall into a hierarchy of which the ultimate member is *rasa*. At the level of words, the quality of *dhvani* contributes to *rasa*. At the level of sentences, poetic representations are formed which evoke certain emotions. By proper combination, all the elements yield a *bhāva* (a dominant mood or disposition). The word *bhāva* means an emotion, a state of mind, form of consciousness, or latent impression which exists in all beings. There are various kinds of *bhavas*, but eight or nine dominant or permanent ones (*sthayi-bhāva*) are usually identified: delight (*rati*), laughter (*hāsa*), sorrow (*śoka*), anger (*krodha*), heroism (*utsāha*), fear (*bhaya*), disgust (*jugupsā*), wonder (*vismaya*), and serenity (*śama*). *Bhāvas* are combined to yield a dominant mood or disposition which is transformed, in the aesthetic work, into one of eight or nine *rasas:* the erotic (*śṛngāra*), the comic (*hāsya*), the pathetic (*karuṇa*), the furious (*raudra*), the heroic (*vīra*), the terrible (*bhayānaka*), the disgustful (*bībhatsa*), the marvellous (*adbhuta*), and the quietistic (*śanta*).

The aim of the poetic composition is "to attain to the condition of *rasa* in the man of poetic sensibility." That condition is the manifestation of *rasa*, characterized by the heightening of *sattva*. (*Sattva* is one of three components of all material nature, being fine, light, true, good, and intelligible.) The "tasting of *rasa*" is a unique form of cognition. Abhinavagupta likens it to a state of religious contemplation. It is a condition in which involvement with the practical, petty aspects of ordinary life (*saṃsāra*) is dissolved into a sense of oneness, and that dissolution engenders a sense of wonder. However, unlike religious release, aesthetic perception is temporary, lasting only as long as the experience of the work. Thus art strives for an attitude of detachment, a state of contemplating *sādhāraṇa* (the common, universal, general). Through art one obtains a "dislodgement" or a transcendence from *saṃsāra* (material existence). That dislodgement brings an extra-ordinary perception which is both *alaukika* (transcendental) and *camatkāra* (astonishing). For this reason Viśvanātha contends that all *rasas* may be reduced ultimately to the *rasa* of wonder (*vismaya*). The ideal aesthetic experience according to all the theorists of *rasa* is a state of blissful contemplation.

The means appropriate to obtain the manifestation of *rasa* are those which evoke a sense of generality and repose. Technique at all levels of poetic composition aims to remove "obstacles" to the consciousness of generality. Obstacles are, for example, the particulars of time, place, and concrete detail. The preferred mode of representation is highly stylized and idealized. Certain subjects which disturb the mind, such as the occurrence of death, are proscribed. Also certain combinations of dominant or accessory emotions are condemned, as they incite conflict and contradiction. Viśvanātha provides an extensive array of types of heroes and heroines, their gestures, dress, and appropriate relationships for the use of the poet. Predictability in all aspects of depiction is preferred, as it minimizes the distraction of novel detail. Events and actions are ideally stylized gestures; character is revealed rather than developed. Even in guidelines for the plot of a drama, the favored progression of events is

one with a predictable outcome. Plot is conceived not as development, but rather as refinement of mood. Natural objects are represented in their generality rather than particularity, in order that a detached view be obtained. Literature is not meant to assist the vicarious achievement of mundane goals. It should assist a temporary contemplation of pure being. It aims to transcend involvement with purposeful activity and striving for the attainment of worldly success. The favored relationship between the reader and the literary representation is not emotional involvement and identification, but rather dispassionate contemplation.

In *Āynār Moddhe Ēkā* a whole set of descriptions conforms to the mode of representation just described. Clearly the conventions prescribed by the theory of *rasa* are operant in this part of the novel. The descriptions of Kamala in the wedding ritual are composed to give the reader the experience of a *rasa*, the quiestistic mood.

IV

The other level of structure in the novel comprises descriptions of Kamala as she struggles with difficult and ambiguous encounters with various people, mostly men. This level has an episodic plot which follows a process of changes in the protagonist Kamala. These changes may be characterized as a movement from innocence to experience, from ignorance and naiveté to knowledge. The result of Kamala's experiences and knowledge is her choice to retreat from modernized ways and return to a more traditional life. The movement of the novel may be described structurally as one from increasing complication to resolution. Kamala's encounters develop toward a culmination, which is her marriage to Abani. Representation of events in these sections is realistic: that is, time, place, and concrete and psychological details are minutely recorded for the reader. The lapse of time is from six months to a year, and it is evident in the pace of the action. The outcome of the episodic plot is predictable in the sense that the reader begins the novel with the awareness that Kamala is being married to Abani, but in the course of the narrative this awareness is not encouraged -- the reader is not reminded and the effect is one of suspense and anticipation for an unpredictable outcome. The realistic mode of representation lends to the reader's identification with Kamala and involvement with the particularities and subjectivity of her experiences. This level of structure is in the mode of action. That is, it consists in realistic and concrete description, specific and personal characterization, minimal aesthetic distance, and a process of change which is a development toward a culminative effect.

The mode of action as an ideal may be better understood by reviewing some ideas associated with the novel.

The novel is a relatively new genre in literary history. It developed in the West, in an aesthetic tradition founded in Aristotelian poetics. Many notions linked with the novel as literature have features in common with Indian aesthetics.

For example critics of the novel as well as those dealing with literature in general agree that literary language is a special form of communication. It is characterized as communication with maximum implication, in which connotative meanings of words are manipulated as much as denotative meanings. Literary language communicates on multiple levels of sense, feeling, tone, and intention; its method is indirect, working by ambiguity, paradox, irony, and a complex of attitudes.[3] The poetic or literary statement is contrasted with the uses of language in science, history, philosophy, and journalism. Because narrative prose is more discursive than poetry, it overlaps with strictly discursive uses of language. But narrative prose is literature, and as literature it seeks to maximize its levels of meaning through the selection of devices -- the deliberate control of language. Thus control is called style, technique, or diction. Thus control is called style, technique, or diction. Thus both Indian aestheticians and Western critics find the quality of resonance and the control of resonance to be the unique feature of literary language. However, where for Indian aestheticians this level of meaning is conceived as a removal and an elevation from ordinary, conventional discourse, here poetic meaning is conceived as the closest verbal approximation to real psychological experience.

According to critics of the novel, artistic form has appeal for the reader because it evokes certain universal psychological dispositions. Kenneth Burke for example speaks of "mental forms" which are "imitates." These are broadly "the potentiality for being interested in certain processes or arrangements" such as crescendo, contrast, comparison, balance, and the like. In order for these general movements or forms to be experienced emotionally, they must be particularized through subjective examples. The writer creates in the mind of his reader an "appetite" for the psychological satisfaction of realized form through the particulars of his experience and then gives pleasure by adequately satisfying that "appetite."[4] Other critics ascribe the appeal of art to a heightening of gestalt perception, a fulfillment of the need to pattern experience, and the impulse to enclose (i.e. as with chapter divisions).[5]

These cognitive-psychological universals seem to correspond to the concept of *bhāvas* in the theory of *rasa*. However they are not as precisely identified and they are not conceived as static latent emotions. Critics of the novel link these mental forms with the notion of process or movement. Also, theorists of *rasa* view art as a "transformation" and an "elevation" of natural dispositions -- an extra-ordinary universalization of universals. Novel critics on the other hand view art as an "imitation" of them -- the imbedment of universals in concrete and particular examples.

The notion of process of development is also part of the concept of aesthetic structure in the novel. That structure is called "plot" or "action." Sheldon Sacks defines the genre of the novel as a represented action; the structure of the novel in his view entails a development of complications and then their resolution.[6] Other critics call that basic structure plot. Crane argues that plot is the unifying principle in the novel, composed of the elements action, character, and thought. His definition requires a process of change in

one of the three elements.[7] Friedman, who identifies at least fourteen types of plot according to different thematic emphases, also concurs that plot entails a process of change "for the sake of the sequence of emotions which that process evokes in the reader."[8] Shroder speaks of the "process" of the novel which he calls "demythification." The novel in his view is a genre characterized by the theme of education -- a portrayal of the passage from a state of naiveté to a state of experience and maturity, the model of the *Bildungsroman*.[9]

The aim of the novel, according to critics, is to give the reader an experience of insight, recognition, illumination, or heightened emotion. In descriptive terms this experience seems similar to that in the theory of *rasa*, although the terms derive from different religio-philosophical systems. The novel should give the reader a perception of what is universally true or real, which is pleasurable. In Kenneth Burke's words, the work is a symbol which "attracts by its power of formula" and "charms" the reader by a sudden illumination which that formula throws upon his life.[10] David Daiches refers to the work as a "vehicle in which an emotion may live objectively."[11] That emotion is paradoxically impersonal, linked with an objective insight. The idea that literary structure is the objectification of an emotion suggests *rasa*.

Although the aim of the novel as an aesthetic experience may be descriptively similar in the theory of the novel and in Indian aesthetics, the means to that aim -- the form and content of the novel -- is seen as entirely different. The novel as a genre evolved historically in a society with a heightened sense of individuality and self-determination -- one which was literate, self-aware, leisured, and socially mobile. The novel is considered "the product of an intellectual milieu shaped by Descartes and Locke . . . which contains an insistence upon the importance of individual experience, a distrust of universals, and an elevation of the data of the senses as the necessary means by which ideas are formed."[12] Critics contrast the novel with its predecessor, the romance, which reflects a different view of society. The romance is the expression of an aristocratic society; it deals with idealized characters such as heroes, who are not modelled on real people in society but rather are stylized figures expanded into psychological archetypes.[13] The romantic sensibility "mythifies" reality, rendering it more poetic and adventurous than it is in common experience. The novel on the other hand is the anti-romance. It aims to deflate rather than inflate reality -- to confront and shatter illusion.[14] The modern novel is closely associated with realism. The representation of character, events, and actions is typically realistic, concrete, intense, and engaging. Descriptions are ideally credible. A correlate to the goal of psychological realism is the use of techniques which minimize aesthetic distance, such as stream of consciousness and the first person narrative. The reader is not only invited to empathize and identify with the literary representation, he is hopefully drawn to an involved awareness of contextually defined ambiguities and ironies. By means of the process of development in the novel, his sense of involvement with complications is dramatically intensified to a point of catharsis or resolution, giving him both pleasure and insight.

Clearly the nature of technique and form associated with the novel contrasts in major ways with the mode of *rasa*. Form in the novel is a process of change, a development, whereas in the mode of *rasa* it is an evocation of a static, dominant mood. In the former the effect is culminative; in the latter cumulative. The goal of the novel is to convey an experience of insight and pleasure by objectifying the subjective -- by illuminating universal truth through particulars arranged in a surprising, original way. With *rasa* insight is gained ideally by an elevation of the typical and the predictable. Aesthetic distance is, in the former, preferably minimal with heightened empathy and engaging identification in the reader. In the latter it is maximal, tending toward detachment and disinvolvement from concrete experience -- a world twice removed from ordinary life. Also, where the effect of the novel is obtained by means of conflict, complication, and ambiguity as part of the process of resolution and simplification, the effect of the work composed in the mode of *rasa* is obtained by means of complementary and homogenous elements.

In *Āynār Moddhe Ēkā* the set of descriptions pertaining to Kamala's experiences with modernized values and people clearly conforms to the mode of representation associated with the novel by Western critics. It entails a process of change in the protagonist, through particular and subjective complications leading to a resolution. These descriptions are intense, immediate, and realistic.

V

In spite of the two divergent modes of representation, it is possible to conceive this novel as an aesthetic unity. The work cannot be explained as a unity solely in terms of *rasa*. Where one mode of representation conforms to the style of *rasa*, another is, according to the canons of *rasa* aesthetics, full of "faults" and "depressants" of *rasa*. The latter contains concrete, particularistic, conflict-ridden, and personal elements which do not contribute to a generalized mood and detachment. The quietistic *rasa*, according to Viśvanātha, is congruous with the pathetic, the disgustful, and the marvellous. Thus the episodic events in the narrative whose thematic load clearly covers the range of surprise, wonder at new experience to self-pity and disgust, could be viewed as a set of minor *bhavas* intended to support the effect of the dominant *bhava*. However the manner in which Kamala's bewilderment, agitation, excitement, and confusion are described does not lend to objectivity and a distanced perspective which the mode of *rasa* requires. By the criterion of the *rasa* theory the work as a whole fails aesthetically. Neither can the work be explained as a unity in terms of the mode of action. The parts of the novel which are accounts of Kamala in the context of her marriage ritual create a static, contemplative image. The character of Kamala which is developed in the episodic plot is inconsistent with this image. A bewildered, striving, a self-determined Kamala of the episodic plot is suddenly turned into an idealized Bride, who is not introspective, not confused, and not concerned with choosing

courses of action, but who is on the contrary serene, passive, and blissful. The novel succeeds as an aesthetic unity because the two strains in it are merged by a common symbol which is the marriage. On the level of *rasa*, the scene of the marriage is the vehicle for a cumulative mood, the quietistic *rasa*. On the level of action, it marks the end of Kamala's struggle with independence and serves as the culmination of a series of complications. Thus the two modes are ultimately integrated by means of a common symbol.

In the novel *Āynār Moddhe Ēkā*, then, Buddhadeva has employed two different styles of literary representation. His audience of urban, educated Bengalis is very likely familiar with conventions associated with *rasa* as well as those associated with the modern novel. Unless his readers are critical, they may not be conscious of the hybrid composition. However critics and interpreters of this and other Bengali novels cannot base their evaluations on only one set of conventions. Although the work is called a novel, it contains elements which are wholly inconsistent with the genre as Western critics describe it. Moreover those elements are not sporadic failures in literary facility; they agree consistently with the ideals of the *rasa* theory. This novel by Buddhadeva Bose represents the integration of two different sets of literary conventions, and the reader can appreciate his achievement only in light of both models.

Footnotes

1. Calcutta: M. C. Sarkar.

2. Primary sources for this discussion are: Viśvanātha Kaviraja, *The Mirror of Composition*, trans. Pramadadasa Mitra (Benaras: Motilal Banarsi Dass, 1956), and Raniero Gnoli, *The Aesthetic Experience According to Abhinavagupta* (Benaras: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series, Vol. LXII, 2nd. ed., 1956). Also J. A. Honeywell, "The Poetic Theory of Viśvanātha" in *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Vol. 28, Winter 1969, and Edwin Gerow, "The Persistence of Classical Esthetic Categories in Contemporary Indian Literature" in E. C. Dimock, Jr., *et. al.*, "An Introduction to Indian Literature" (book in press at the University of Chicago Press, Chicago). The latter chapter inspired this paper.

3. See I. A. Richards, "Science and Poetry," in *Criticism*, ed. M. Schorer, *et. al.* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., rev. ed., 1958) and Cleanth Brooks, *The Well Wrought Urn* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1947).

4. Kenneth Burke, *Counter-Statement* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), pp. 46f.

5. Philip Stevick, "The Theory of Fictional Chapters," in *The Theory of the Novel*, ed. P. Stevick (New York: The Free Press, 1967.)

6. Sheldon Sacks, *Fiction and the Shape of Belief* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967).

7. R. S. Crane, "The Concept of Plot," in *The Theory of the Novel.*

8. Norman Friedman, "Forms of Plot," in *The Theory of the Novel.*

9. Maurice Z. Shroder, "The Novel as a Genre," in *The Theory of the Novel.*

10. Kenneth Burke, *Counter-Statement*, p. 58.

11. David Daiches, *A Study of Literature for Readers and Critics* (London: Andre Deutsch, 1968), p. 46.

12. Philip Stevick (ed.), *The Theory of the Novel*, intro. p. 7. See also Ian Watt, *The Rise of the Novel* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1964).

13. Northrop Frye, "The Four Forms of Fiction," in *The Theory of the Novel.*

14. Maurice Z. Shroder, "The Novel as a Genre."

III. TAGORE'S *SACRIFICE:* AN ANALYTIC NOTE

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Rabindranath Tagore's *Sacrifice** has been acclaimed by most critics as one of his finest dramatic achievements. The author has been praised for presenting in the play "a many-sided conflict" which is "truly dramatic in its intensity,"[1] for offering a "thesis, in his own medium of poetry and drama, against idol worship,"[2] for creating "an intricate plot which is evolved through well-marked stages,"[3] and for maintaining a "chaste and disciplined restraint of emotion."[4] But the play has generated some unfavorable criticism as well. Edward Thompson, while acknowledging "the passion and magnificent emotion of *Sacrifice*," which according to him, "will carry it through a stage performance, a century hence,"[5] has nevertheless found fault with it. Thompson charges that "the characters in *Sacrifice* are irresponsible . . . puppets in the grip of a fiercely felt idea," that "the conversions are not worked out psychologically, in the case of Jaising and Raghupati," and that "the play's finish is sketchy, hastily compressed. . . ."[6] S. C. Sengupta has given some answers to these charges. He attempts to prove that "all the . . . characters have distinctive personalities,"[7] and that "a careful study of the text shows that the seeds of the change [Raghupati's conversion at the end] have been sown in the earliest part of the drama."[8] But few attempts have been made so far to explain the real nature of the dramatic conflicts in the play, or to elucidate the full significance of the title, or to interpret the positive note on which the play ends.

The purpose of the present essay, therefore, is threefold: first, to bring out the real nature of the dramatic conflicts presented in the play; secondly, to explain the symbolic meaning of the title; and finally, to demonstrate that *Sacrifice*, from the thematic point of view, is not only a negation of idolatry, and an "indictment of animal sacrifice,"[9] but more importantly, an affirmation of Tagore's humanistic faith.

**Sacrifice* (1917) is an English translation of the original Bengali play *Visarjan* (1890). In the words of Amiya Chakravarty, "*Sacrifice* shows several departures from the original Bengali. Different scenes are amalgamated, subplots are omitted, and long declamations are severely cut." *A Tagore Reader* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1971), p. 123.

The conflict between the King, Govinda, and the Priest, Raghupati, evidently supplies the main action and dramatic situations in the play. But this conflict is much more than a clash between two strong personalities or between the spiritual and the temporal authorities. It should be viewed in a historical perspective. In his essay, "A Vision of India's History," Tagore says:

> In the Bhagavata Purana it says that the Kshatriya king, Kartavirya, stole a sacrificial cow from Yamadagni, a priest of the same Bhrigu clan, and caused the class war led by Parasu-rama, the son of Yamadagni, against the whole Kshatriya community. Unless the stealing of the sacrificial cow stands for an idea, such a Brahmin crusade against the entire Kshatriya class fails to have meaning; it really indicates that among a great body of Kshatriyas there arose a spirit of resistance against sacrificial rites, and this gave rise to fierce conflict between the two communities.*

Reading the play in the light of this statement, it is not unreasonable to assume that in *Sacrifice* Tagore was re-enacting an age-old conflict between the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas that according to him shaped the history of India. Tagore further says in the same essay:

> That there was naturally a period of struggle between the cult of ritualism supported by the Brahmins, and the religion of love, [supported by such Kshatriyas as Krishna and Ramachandra] is evident. (p. 185)

Sacrifice epitomizes this momentous historical struggle. It is not accidental that Jaising, who sacrifices himself in the play, happens to be a Kshatriya. Analyzing the life and teachings of three great Kshatriyas of India, Buddha, Rama and Krishna, Tagore comments:

> It clearly shows that Kshatriya ideal: its freedom, courage of intellect, and self-sacrificing heart. (p. 186)

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*Amiya Chakravarty, ed., *A Tagore Reader*, p. 184. All subsequent quotations from Tagore's writings, unless otherwise specified, are taken from this book, and so the source henceforward will be indicated by the page number after the quoted material.

Jaising, by dissociating himself from Raghupati, by divining the truth about religion, and by finally sacrificing himself in order to promote love and harmony, appears in the play as an embodiment of Kshatriya ideals. In the true tradition of the Kshatriyas, and particularly Ramachandra, who "embraced as his friend the untouchable *Chandala*, Guhaka," (p. 187) Jaising bestows his love and affection on the beggar girl Aparna.

The conflict between Govinda and Raghupati, being as it is, a microcosmic representation of India's historic class-struggle, does not diminish, however, the thematic importance of the internal conflict of Jaising. Jaising's mental conflict is the result of three different forces acting simultaneously on him from three different directions. First, there is the influence of the king, Govinda, whom Jaising loves and reveres.[10] The beggar-girl, Aparna, with her abiding love and overwhelming concern for Jaising, represents the second force. The third and the most powerful of the forces acting on Jaising is the influence of Raghupati. Since finding him as an orphan child, Raghupati has raised Jaising as his own son. Everything Jaising loves, knows, and believes in is represented by the Priest. Jaising's attachment to Raghupati is so profound and his eventual estrangement from him so violent that to explain their relationship fully I am inclined to use a term employed by C. G. Jung to designate a psycholgoical relationship. It seems appropriate to say that Jaising is in a state of *participation mystique* or unconscious identity with Raghupati. Jung says:

> To put it [*participation mystique*] briefly, it means a state of identity in mutual unconsciousness. Perhaps I should explain this further. If the same unconscious complex is constellated in two people at the same time it produces a remarkable emotional effect, a projection, which causes either a mutual attraction or a mutual repulsion. When I and another person have an unconscious relation to the same important fact, I become in part identical with him, and because of this I orient myself to him as I would to the complex in question were I conscious of it.[11]

According to Jung, "in his early years, the child lives in a state of *participation mystique* with his parents."[12] In Jaising's case this state of *participation mystique* has persisted throughout his life, because he has known no other relationship. His private and professional lives have coalesced into one centered around the temple and the Priest. In Jaising's mind Raghupati has often been identified with the goddess Kali: "It is all the same, whether the voice comes from the Goddess, or from my Master." (p. 139) When Jaising finds that the Priest is advocating a course of action that runs counter to all his hitherto held beliefs, he experiences an acute psychic division. His rational mind cannot accept Raghu's command to kill the king, but his strong unconscious identity with Raghu never allows him to reject it either. On the conscious level he begins to disbelieve the goddess and the Priest, but his *participation mystique* takes every word of Raghu as eternal truth. This psychic dichotomy manifests itself in

ravings into which he occasionally bursts:

> Deeds are better, however cruel they may be, than the hell of thinking and doubting. You are right, my Master; truth is in your words. To kill is no sin, to kill brother is no sin, to kill the king is no sin. -- Where do you go, my brothers? To the fair at Nishipur? There the women are to dance? Oh, this world is pleasant! And the dancing limbs of the girls are beautiful. In what careless merriment the crowds flew through the roads, making the sky ring with their laughter and song. I will follow them. (p. 137)

Jaising, the ascetic servant of the temple, has reached a point where he finds the dancing limbs of the girls beautiful, and wants to follow them. The mind that was shaped and nourished by a strong belief in the goddess and the priest is losing all sense of balance and direction.

> -- No, she is nowhere. She is naught. But take pity upon Jaising, O Illusion, and for him become true. Art thou so irredeemably false, that not even my love can send the slightest tremor of life through thy nothingness? O fool, for whom have you upturned your cup of life, emptying it to the last drop? -- for this unanswering void -- truthless, merciless, and motherless? (p. 141)

Since Jaising has known no existence divorced from the goddess and the priest, the deprivation of the emotional and intellectual moorings that the temple provided him with, lands him in an abysmal void. His physical death is simply the culmination of the process of degeneration that started much earlier. Jaising's self-immolation seems, therefore, to be an inevitable consequence.

Inevitable though his self-sacrifice appears from the point of view of his psychic existence, he is nonetheless presented with a choice. When Jaising hears Raghupati's homily on sin in which the Priest tries to justify the killing of king Govinda on the ground that killing is an unceasing universal phenomenon existing from time immemorial, he finds himself confronted with an inscrutable world. The two most familiar figures in his life, Raghu and Kali, suddenly become incomprehensible. For a moment he thinks a way out of this:

> The road is straight before me. With an alms-bowl in hand and the beggar girl as my sweetheart I shall walk on. Who says that the world's ways are difficult? Anyhow we reach the end -- the end where all laws and rules are no more, where the errors and hurts of life are forgotten, where is rest, eternal rest. What is the use of scriptures, and the teacher and his instructions? -- (pp. 137-138)

He toys with the idea of giving up his position as the temple servant and of joining Aparna who loves him and whom he loves. But he is immediately reminded of Raghu's orders, presumably coming face to face with him. "My Master, my father, what wild words are these of mine? I was living in a dream." (p. 138) Jaising, in a psychic bond with Raghupati, now considers the Priest's orders to be real, and his own thoughts as "wild words" and a "dream." But even after Raghupati has wrung from Jaising a firm promise to get kingly blood, the promise that Jaising repeats after Raghu in a hypnotic trance, Jaising, on the conscious level, still finds Aparna to be someone he can cling to:

> Leave me not, Aparna. Sit here by my side. Why are you so sad, my darling? Do you miss some god, who is god no longer? But is there any need of god in this little world of ours? Let us be fearlessly godless and come closer to each other. (p. 142)

But his *participation mystique* with Raghupati prevents him from responding affirmatively to Aparna's persistent entreaty: "Jaising, come, let us leave this temple and go away together." (p. 142)

It should be pointed out at this stage that Jaising's self-immolation has not been prompted by any reverence on his part for the goddess or the tradition, for he has ceased to believe in them at that point. His self-immolation proceeds, very largely, though not entirely, from an unconscious motivation. Jung says:

> So long as a *participation mystique* with the parents persists, a relatively infantile style of life can be maintained. Through the *participation mystique* life is pumped into us from outside in the form of unconscious motivations, for which, since they are unconscious, no responsibility is felt.[13]

Jaising's act of killing himself and offering his blood -- the kingly blood -- to the goddess is, in some measure, an unconscious compliance with the wishes of a Father-figure whom he can never bear to see mistaken. However, on the conscious level, Jaising instinctively finds a new meaning of sacrifice. The ritual of sacrifice, which the tradition upholds, and which he has observed with devotion, he finds to be false when the Priest resolves to replace the animal with the King himself. He can no longer accept the traditional attitude to sacrifice, typified by Queen Gunavati, which approves of animal sacrifice in order to obtain a boon from the goddess. True sacrifice, Jaising now feels, is that in which the person sacrificing knows that he is paying for something already received:

> I know you wanted my heart to break its bounds in pain overflowing my Mother's fee. This is the true sacrifice. (p. 137)

> Leave this temple? Yes, I will leave, Alas, Aparna, I must leave. Yet I cannot leave it, before I have paid my last dues to the -- (p. 142)

Jaising has received in the past love and guidance from the goddess Kali (and Raghu) and he wants to pay for this by his own life. Thus, his rational thought reinforces his unconscious motivation to lead him to shed his own blood (kingly blood).

Later, Jaising discovers another meaning of sacrifice. After undergoing complete disillusionment with the goddess, and experiencing Aparna's self-less love toward him, he realizes that sacrifice is the highest manifestation of boundless, self-effacing, altruistic love. He says:

> God must be all sacrifice, flowing out his life
> in all creations. (p. 142)

This line is clearly reminiscent of the sacrifice of *Purusha* (Primeval Spirit) as described in the Rig-Veda. According to the Rig-Veda, *Purusha* sacrificed himself to create the four classes of society.

> The Brahman was his mouth, of both his arms
> was the Rajanya made.
> His thighs became the Vaisya, from his feet
> the Sudra was produced.
> Rig-Veda, X, 90[14]

Jaising's sacrifice seems to acquire a similar symbolic value in the context of the play. The sacrifice of *Purusha* created the four classes -- the Brahmins, the Kshatriyas, the Vaisyas and the Sudras. The sacrifice of Jaising saves them from destruction. His sacrifice brings the Kshatriya Govinda and the Brahmin Raghupati together. They also accept the beggar girl, possibly a Sudra, with affection and understanding.

In *The Religion of Man* Tagore himself refers to this Vedic hymn to explain the nature of true sacrifice. He says:

> According to the Gita, the deeds that are done solely for the sake of self fetter our soul; the disinterested action, performed for the sake of the giving up of self, is the true sacrifice. For creation itself comes of the self-sacrifice of Brahma, which has no other purpose, and therefore, in our performance of the duty which is self-sacrificing, we realize the spirit of Brahma.[15]

Jaising says, "Let me think only of duty." (p. 138) By performing his duty in self-sacrifice Jaising realizes the spirit of Brahma. It may be pertinent to point out here that not only Jaising but protagonists of some of Tagore's other plays, like Shrimati in *Natir Puja* and Abhijit in *Muktadhara* also give their lives in performing their duties and thus, according to Tagore, realize the spirit of Brahma.

Tagore says at another place in *The Religion of Man:*

> . . . men have willingly sacrificed their vital needs and courted death in order to express their *dharma*, which represents the truth of the Supreme Man.[16]

Jaising, like Abhijit in *Muktadhara*, appears to reflect the truth of the Supreme Man, a concept that Tagore elaborately develops in *The Religion of Man.*

> And I say of the Supreme Man, that he is infinite in his essence, he is finite in his manifestation in us the individuals. . . . This means that he [a man] must reveal in his own personality the Supreme Person by his disinterested activities.[17]

> The vision of the Supreme Man is realized by our imagination, but not created by our mind. More real than individual men, he surpasses each of us in his permeating personality which is transcendental. The procession of his ideas, following his great purpose, is ever moving across obstructive facts towards the perfected truth. We, the individuals, having our place in his composition, may or may not be in conscious harmony with his purpose, may even put obstacles in his path bringing down our doom upon ourselves. But we gain our true religion when we consciously co-operate with him, finding our exceeding joy through suffering and sacrifice.[18]

Only after Jaising's death, Govinda and Raghupati consciously co-operate with the Supreme Man, and thus gain true religion.

This conscious co-operation signals a significant development in the play. Most of the characters exhibit at one time or another a shattering disillusionment with the goddess Kali. Aparna, Govinda, Jaising, and finally Raghupati, all address the goddess at a time of crisis and find no answers. Raghu, who suffers the greatest disenchantment after the death of Jaising, throws away the image. Evidently, then, the play is a negation of idolatry. But their disillusionment turns into a positive faith. This is the humanistic faith. It does not emerge all of a sudden at the end of the play. It has been present throughout the play as an undercurrent. The Brahmin Raghu accepted and raised the Kshatriya Jaising as his own son. Raghu realizes how much he loved Jaising after Jaising's death, and discovers in beggar-girl Aparna the real Mother-figure. As long as he was a fanatical worshiper, he was oblivious of these facts. Tagore seems to be saying in effect that a religious fanatic forgets human love and human values. As the king Govinda says:

> For a man loses his humanity when it concerns his gods. (p. 138)

When the priest sacrificed Aparna's goat he was thinking only of the religious ritual. The love of a beggar girl for her pet goat was of no consequence to him. There are several statements made by different characters in the play which unmistakably testify to the presence of a strong undertone of humanism. General Nayan Rai says to Govinda:

> I am your servant, my King, but I am a man above all. (p. 134)

Jaising says at the beginning of the play:

> Help must come from man when it is denied by the gods. (p. 126)

Toward the end of the play, he believes more in Aparna, a human being, than the goddess Kali. He says to Aparna:

> But is there any need of god in this little world of ours? Let us be fearlessly godless and come closer to each other. (p. 142)
>
> But you *are* my Goddess. (p. 142)

What Jaising realizes on the eve of his sacrifice in an apocalyptic vision, others, especially Raghupati, are brought to realize after his tragic death. To everyone's anxious inquiry Raghupati keeps repeating, "Goddess there is none!" "The Goddess is nowhere" (p. 147), Govinda, at this point, makes a profound statement:

> She [the goddess] has burst her cruel prison of stone, and come back to the woman's heart. (p. 148)

And Raghupati joins him:

> Come, child. Come, Mother. I have found thee. Thou art the last gift of Jaising. (p. 148)

This is the first time that Raghu calls Aparna "Mother" (with a capital M), an epithet that he has previously used only with reference to goddess Kali. There is, however, no attempt on the part of Govinda or Raghupati to deify Aparna. Aparna here stands for humanity. At last the King and the Priest are at one in their assertion that God resides in the human heart. They have both found human love and human values to be more important than religious worship and sacred rites.

In other words, after the traumatic experience of watching Jaising's self-immolation at the altar of goddess Kali, Govinda and Raghupati come to a profound realization that Humanity rather than an incomprehensible Being is the true object of worship. This instinctive belief which they proclaim at

the end of the play is central to Tagore's own convictions and is a recurrent motif in much of his writings.[19] It is difficult to identify a single specific source from which Tagore derived this passion for humanity. Any such attempt is admittedly fraught with speculative errors. However, his *Religion of Man* and his other writings reveal that he was influenced by the Muslim poet-saints of Medieval India like, Dadu, Kabir and Rajjab, the Bauls (roving mendicant singers), and the Vaisnava poets of Bengal. They all presented to Tagore, in various terms, the concept of the Divinity of Man. In *Reminiscences* and some other writings, his references to the French philospher, Auguste Comte, lead one to believe that perhaps, Comte also reinforced his idea of the ultimate superiority of Man.[20] Although Tagore could not have accepted Comte's Positivism -- he has criticized Comte in several essays, and his denunciation of "the intellectual cult of Humanity" in *The Religion of Man* is seemingly an allusion to Positivism -- Tagore's concept of the "Supreme Man" is akin to Comte's doctrine of the "Great Being" inasmuch as they both seek to give a paramount position not to the conventional theological conception of a Supreme Being, but to Man or Humanity.[21] Since Tagore was, by his own admission, a poet rather than a systematic thinker, the concept of God or *Brahman* or *Jivan-devata* (Lord of Life) is patently evident in many of his writings. But in *Sacrifice*, the place of God has been taken by Humanity.

Sacrifice seems to illustrate another basic concept of Tagore which, in actuality, is a derivative of his concept of Man. He says:

> Where the confluence of three streams of Knowledge,
> Love and Action occur, there we find the sanctuary
> of bliss.[22]

It is possible to think that these three streams of Knowledge, Love and Action are represented in the play by Raghupati, Aparna, and Govinda respectively. Aparna is Love incarnate, Raghupati, the learned priest, stands for Knowledge, and Govinda, who prohibited the animal sacrifice by royal decree, symbolizes Action. Their mutual antagonism results in tragedy. But Jaising, by his self-sacrifice, succeeds in uniting them, and thus, brings about the "sanctuary of bliss."

FOOTNOTES

1. Krishna Kripalani, *Rabindranath Tagore: A Biography* (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), p. 124.

2. Hiran Kumar Sanyal, "The Plays of Rabindranath Tagore," *A Centenary Volume: Rabinndranath Tagore, 1861-1941* (New Delhi: Sahitya Academy, 1961), p. 235.

3. S. C. Sengupta, *The Great Sentinel: A Study of Rabindranath Tagore* (Calcutta: A. Mukherjee & Co., 1948), p. 155.

4. Niharranjan Ray, *An Artist in Life: A Commentary on the Life and Works of Rabindranath Tagore* (Trivandrum: University of Kerala Press, 1967), p. 142.

5. Edward Thompson, *Rabindranath Tagore: Poet and Dramatist* (London: Oxford University Press, 1926, 1948), p. 99.

6. Thompson, p. 99.

7. Sengupta, p. 158.

8. Sengupta, p. 157.

9. ". . . *Visarjan Sacrifice* was to be the first indictment of animal sacrifice as sanctioned by Hinduism, and since the indictment took an aesthetic form, it proved very effective . . ." Niharranjan Ray, p. 142.

10. Jaising likens the King to the full moon (p. 128). The concept of Kingship seems to be implicit in the metaphor. The King, like the full moon is complete, not partial; he sheds a pleasant light, dispelling the darkness of ignorance from the minds of his people, and the people look up to him for guidance.

11. C. G. Jung, *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung*, Volume 10 *Civilization in Transition*, tr. by R. F. C. Hull (New York: Pantheon Books, 1964), p. 37.

12. Jung, *Collected Works*, Vol. 17, p. 54.

13. Jung, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 37.

14. R. T. H. Griffith (tr.), *The Hymns of the Rig Veda* (Benares: E. J. Lazarus & Co., 1896-1897), Vol. 2, p. 519.

15. Rabindranath Tagore, *The Religion of Man* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1931), pp. 81-82.

16. Tagore, *Religion of Man*, p. 142.

17. Tagore, *Religion of Man*, p. 116.

18. Tagore, *Religion of Man*, pp. 142-143.

19. In some poems of Tagore we find similar themes that God cannot be found in isolated temples observing sacred rituals, that God is to be found among people, and that the best way to serve God is to serve humanity. See Tagore's poems in Chakravarty, *A Tagore Reader*, "Leave this chanting and singing and telling of beads" (pp. 295-96), "At midnight the would-be ascetic announced: 'This is the time to give up my home and seek for God'" (p. 315), and "'Sire', announced the servant to the King, 'the Saint Narottam has never deigned to enter your royal temple.'" (pp. 319-20).

A speech by the Queen in Tagore's play, *Malini*, runs in the same vein: "But I ask you, is religion a thing that one has to find by seeking? Is it not like sunlight, given to you for all days? I am a simple woman. I do not understand men's creeds and dogmas. I only know that women's true objects of worship come to their own arms, without asking, in the shape of their husbands and their children." Another character, Kemankar, says: ". . . for a moment I dreamt that religion had come at last, in the form of a woman, to lead man's heart to heaven."

(*Collected Poems and Plays of Rabindranath Tagore*, New York: MacMillan Company, 1971, pp. 389and 400-401).

20. "Rabindranath himself had studied Western philosphy with a thoroughness which makes itself felt in occasional references to Spencer and others. . . . The System of Auguste Comte or positivism exerted, however, a remarkable influence on the thinkers of the period, specially in the earlier years of the second half of the century, or, to be more precise, between the years 1860 and 1880. It was said there were more Comtists in Bengal than in France."

(Priyaranjan Sen, *Western Influence in Bengali Literature*, Calcutta: Academic Publishers, 1966, p. 109).

21. "Towards Humanity, who is for us the only true Great Being, we, the conscious elements of whom she is composed, shall henceforth direct every aspect of our life, individual or collective. Our thoughts will be devoted to the knowledge of Humanity, our affections to her love, our actions to her service."

" . . . This Great Being, the worship of whom should be the distinctive feature of our whole life."

"All the points, then, in which the morality of Positive science excels the morality of revealed religion are summed up in the substitution of Love of Humanity for Love of God.

(Auguste Comte, *A General View of Positivism* (New York: Robert Speller & Sons, 1957, pp. 365, 368 and 394).

22. Rabindranath Tagore, *Santiniketana*, Vol. 1, Calcutta, Visvabharati Publications, 1949, quoted by Siddheswar Bhattacharya, "Religion of Tagore," *Rabindranath Tagore: Homage from Visva-Bharati*, ed. Santosh Chandra Sengupta, Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan, 1962, p. 69.

IV. THE BRAHMO IDEA OF SOCIAL REFORM AND THE PROBLEM OF FEMALE EMANCIPATION IN BENGAL

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The spiritual leader of the revolt against Keshub Sen in 1878 was Sivanath Sastri, a remarkably gifted intellect, learned scholar and prolific writer of fiction and non-fiction. In the annals of nineteenth-century Brahmo history, there is not another figure more dedicated to fundamantal Brahmo principles sustained over three generations, than Sastri. Interpreted by Sastri, Brahmoism was from Rammohun's time to his own a rational this-wordly faith, humanitarian in sympathy, and humanist in the way religious belief was reconciled with the belief in the idea of progress. In short, the Unitarian social gospel which Keshub abandoned in the 1870's Sastri continued to defend and develop as an essential ingredient of the Sadharan Brahmo ideology.

Sastri represents a generation of Brahmos profoundly influenced by British and American Unitarianism. But it was not so much the Jesus-centered Unitarian gospel with its stress on the ethical and historic Christ which moved Sastri and his friends, as much as it was the social reformist aspect of Unitarianism which championed the oppressed, and provided concrete programs to alleviate their poverty and degradation. This is the line that separates Sastri and the Sadharans from Rammohun Roy and his *Precepts of Jesus*, Protap Mazumdar and his *Oriental Christ*, as well as Keshub Sen himself, who never ceased to admire the exalted image of Christ as prophet.

Unlike Keshub Sen or Protap Mazumdar, Sivanath Sastri has a good image among twentieth century historians of the Bengal Renaissance. Though acknowledged a Brahmo theist, as Keshub was, he has been viewed as rationalist rather than mystic. From his image, Sastri remained loyal to Brahmo humanism whereas Keshub defected from an earlier faith in man's perfectability to complete surrender to salvation by the grace of God. Sastri was Vidyasagar's true successor as champion of the Hindu woman's right to be a human being and we are continually reminded in textbooks on the Bengal Renaissance that the exciting cause for the schism between the Sadharans and Keshub was precisely the issue of Keshub's hypocrisy in marrying off his sexually immature daughter to the polygamous, idol-worshipping, jungly Maharaja of Cooch Behar. Moreover, Sastri was a political liberal and nationalist, we are reminded, whereas Keshub remained loyal to Queen Victoria and the Anglo bureaucratic establishment.

This image of a Sastri as the eternally young Brahmo progressive is interesting in light of his sociological background. Born in 1847 in a village of the 24 Pargannahs, Sastri was the son of a Brahman pundit and nephew of Dwarkanath Vidyabhusan, one of Vidyasagar's closest friends of the Sanskritic reformer type.[1] The special family orientation was unlike that of most other Brahmos. Religiously, the family was not *Vaishnava* but *Sakto*, it was sophisticated about the new style of life in Calcutta, and quite receptive to certain liberal reforms -- largely through Vidyasagar's direct influence.[2]

In fact, Sivanath Sastri's liberalism did not start with the Brahmo Samaj but with Vidyasagar's influence through Vidyabhusan. Sivanath's earliest social reformist attitudes in which female emancipation was of primary consideration, was derived from the circle of liberal Hindu pundits generally associated with the Sanskrit College in Calcutta. Dwarkanath Vidyabhusan was himself a professor of literature at the College and its assistant secretary.[3] This circle of little known pundit reformer types also included Turanath Tarkabachaspati,[4] Modan Moyun Tarkalankar,[5] as well as Vidyasagar.

It should come as no surprise, then, that when Sastri reached nine years of age, he should be placed in Sanskrit College as a student through the influence of the pundits.[6] At the same time, because his father valued English and the English style of education, he got his son admitted to Hare's School.[7] Thus, in 1856, young Sastri came to live in Calcutta, an event which he recalled much later in life with considerable dismay. Like Akkhoy Kumar Dutt and Ramtanu Lahiri, Sivanath Sastri saw the great metropolis not as a super bazaar where enormous fortunes could be made but as a bottomless pit of misfortune and suffering, poverty and degradation.[8] It is interesting to speculate whether these accounts of poverty, prostitution, drunkenness and dope addiction suggest a growing sense of humanitarian conscience and consciousness among sensitive young Bengalis preparing them emotionally for conversion to the Brahmo faith.

Another event which Sastri later recalled with horror took place in 1859 when the 12-year old boy was compelled to marry against his will. Evidently, his otherwise liberal father found nothing immoral, indecent, or inhuman about the act. Nevertheless, in the midst of the family circle a new sense of awareness about man's inhumanity to women was being actively propagated. From 1855 on, Sivanath's uncle, Vidyabhusan, was actively assisting Vidyasagar's female reform campaign -- especially in the area of widow remarriage.[9] Another interesting fact about this formative period in Sivanath's life and career was that his father had met Debendranath Tagore, the leading Brahmo of the day and was favorably impressed with him.[10] There was nothing surprising about this in light of the fact that Vidyasagar was then secretary of the Tattvabodhini Sabha and one of the charismatic leaders for young Brahmos.

Sivanath's earliest institutional exposure to the Brahmo Samaj was probably in 1862 when he attended meetings and services with his friends.[11] At this point, other facts about Brahmo history of this decade should be recalled. A new charismatic hero had emerged in the presence of Keshub Sen whose theistic liberalism strongly appealed to Debendranath but alienated the agnostic rationalist Vadyasagar who resigned from the Tattvabodhini Sabha in 1859. From that year, younger Brahmos turned increasingly from Vidyasagar to Keshub.

It is probably not insignificant that in 1866 when Keshub led the younger Brahmos out of the parent body in direct opposition to Debendranath's policies, the 19-year old Sivanath who followed Keshub, underwent his first serious "mental crisis." This was an important year he recalled in his autobiography. Besides the crisis as a result of Brahmo conflict, he experienced great agony for personal reasons. After passing his college entrance exam, he learned that his father, displeased with his daughter-in-law, forced Sivanath to discard her and marry a second time.[12]

Sivanath objected violently at first out of compassion and love for his wife. In the end, however, his father's threats of physical harm to him and his wife, made him change his mind and marry a second time. The event so tortured Sastri that he thought he would lose his mind.[13] He became engrossed with a sense of sin and started questioning everything including his very identity as a human being.[14]

To transcend this critical juncture of his life, Sivanath turned to Unitarian and Brahmo literature. Umesh Chandra Dutt, Sastri's close Brahmo friend from his own village, gave him a copy of Theodore Parker's sermons.[15] Sastri read the American's sermons each night before retiring and later adapted them to his own cultural and personal needs by composing prayers of his own.[16] In this way he found God and through God found the courage to "choose the only right path open . . ."

The year 1866 was painful also because by drawing close to Keshub, he necessarily offended and alienated others in the family circle whom he had loved deeply over the years. The rivalry between Keshub and Vidyasagar since 1858 had turned the family against the Brahmo Samaj. This was certainly an important factor explaining Vidyabhusan's anti-Brahmo and anti-Keshub editorials in the *Samprakash*. As far as Sivanth's father was concerned, it was Keshub's Vaishnava leanings that greatly perturbed the old *Sakti*. This was certainly an important factor also as Sivanath himself suggests:

> Born in a *Sakto* family accustomed to *Shakti* worship from childhood, I had an inborn repugnance to the Vaishnava *khol* and *kirtan*.[17]

The years 1868 and 1869 constitute a kind of turning point in Sastri's life. In the former year he openly identified himself with the Keshubites by joining them openly in their Vaishnava-inspired *sankirtan* procession.[18] Then he sang the Sanyal *songit* which proclaimed the equal rights of men and women while repudiating caste.[19] On the occasion, Bijoy Krishna Goswami "heartily welcomed him with an embrace."[20] In August, 1869 Sastri was officially initiated as a Keshubite Brahmo at an impressive ceremony at the mandir.[21] At the same time, under Brahmo influence, he decided to take back his first wife while trying to get his second wife married to someone else.[22] And in the midst of all these developments, Sastri passed his F.A. examination at Sanskrit College standing at the head of his class. As a result, he was given a scholarship worth 50 rupees a month.[23]

Naturally, under the circumstances, relations between Sivanath and his father went from bad to worse. Then when the young man renounced his sacred thread to the great satisfaction of the Brahmo community, his father grew furious and vindictive.[24] One day at home, he asked Sivanath to bow before the family image threatening to beat him if he refused. Sivanath's answer was "that he might beat me to death, but could not make me worship the idol against my conscience."[25] Finally, Sivanath broke off relations with his "tyrannical father" who drove his son out of the house and for the next nineteen years refused to see "the face of his son."[26]

Vidyabhusan, Sivanath's uncle, was no less annoyed and disappointed. "He tried to reason with me," Sivanath said later on, "and told me I was suffering from mono-mania or religious madness."[27] Vidyabhusan's dislike of Keshub's Vaishnava practices was evidently so intense that he continually ridiculed the reformer and his disciples.[28] He predicted that under Keshub's leadership, Brahmoism would "reduce itself into a sectarian cult."[29]

It was Sastri's identity with spirituality which turned off Vidyabhusan and Vidyasagar. But Sastri had responded to the wedding of English and Sanskrit at Sanskrit College precisely as Vidyasagar had done earlier. In fact, Sastri and Vidyasagar had much in common in the way this educational experiment produced in them a fusion of the better features from both civilizations and a passion for justice, equality and rationalism. When Sastri received his B.A. in 1870 he was imbued with most of the liberal sentiments of his uncle and Vidyasagar.[30] Only this passion for theism separated him from them both.

In fact, during the 1870's Sivanath moved from liberalism to radicalism in his social and political views. From the start, Sastri affiliated himself with the progressive wing of the Keshubite movement which included Durga Mohun Das, Ananda Mohun Bose, Monomohun Ghose, Shib Chandra Deb, Umesh Chandra Dutt, Sasipada Bannerji and others. Sastri's intense religiosity and educational background differed from most of the progressives. They were mostly Western-educated, some actually having lived and studied in England; they were all fairly well placed professionally in positions where contact with the British in the English language was common procedure; and they had strong ties with foreign Unitarians from whom they had imbibed both their rational faith and social gospel.

Therefore, Sastri's Brahmo career and identity were from the early 1870's conducted on two levels. Keshub gave young progressives such as Sastri a sense of identity through a new community and even a home, the *Bharat Ashram*, where Sivanath lived with his two wives. But on a different, more intimate level, Sastri's true sense of belonging was invariably with the smaller group or faction of progressives. In this case, the Brahmo progressives were held together not by caste, nor locality, nor Hindu religious background, nor even by being of the same generation. If there were a common denominator, it was the ideology of nineteenth-century liberal religion transmitted in many cases, oddly enough, through the works of Theodore Parker. It was the discovery of Parker by Brahmos -- his collected works in Bengali translation in the 1860's -- which provided them with a vital and powerful bond of common values and ideals.

What was the image of Parker which so moved the progressive Brahmos? Theodore Parker who worked on his father's farm all the while he earned his divinity degree at Harvard (1830-36), and felt the sudden influence on Emerson in 1840, turned to socially-activist Unitarianism in the 1840's and became its most outspoken and dynamic leader.[31] The combination of a superb oratorical style and a radical stance politically in the name of Jesus, endeared him to religious progressives the world over.

Not only Bengali Brahmos but Unitarian progressives in England felt inspired by reading Parker's tracts, sermons and essays. There was no minister of any church in the world then as actively committed to the equality of all men, to women's rights, and to the idea of man's perfectability.[32] His candor amazed and angered the English when in 1849 during a trip there he attacked their government for "neglect of the common people's education."[33] As characteristic of his democratic convictions, he openly attacked aristocratic privilege in British society including the almost sacred notion of the "Gentleman as the type of the State."[34] In Britain, unlike the United States, said he, "all effort is directed it producing the Gentleman whereas the people require education enough to become the servants of the Gentlemen."[35] In the following passage, one of hundreds like it, the voice of the righteously indignant reformer carried as far as Bengal:

> The Parliament which voted 100,000 # of the nation's money for the Queen's horses and hounds, had but 30,000 to spare for the education of her people. . . . You wonder at the Colleges and Collegiate churches of Oxford and Cambridge, at the magnificence of public edifices -- the House of Parliament, the Bank, the palaces of royal and noble men, the splendor the churches -- but you ask, where are the school houses for the people?[36]

Not his theology but the social gospel of progressive Unitarians which he was leading spokesman for, seemed to appeal greatly to the Bengali Brahmos. In 1858 during a famous sermon against the wave of fundamental revivalism sweeping America, Parker blasted the movement for "being opposed to social reform."[37] He had been to their prayer meetings but where in their prayers had he heard a single reference to temperance, to education, to the emancipation of slaves, or to the elevation of women.[38] Said he:

> I do not hear a prayer for honesty, for industry, for brotherly love, any prayers against envy, malice, bigotry. . . . The Revival may spread all over the land. It will make church members -- not good husbands, wives. . . . It will not oppose the rum trade, nor the trade in coolies, nor the trade in African or American slaves.[39]

One link in the chain of humanitarian concern from Parker in America to Sivanath Sastri in Bengal was the famed Unitarian Englishwoman, Mary Carpenter. No Unitarian in England, male or female, defended Parker's social gospel with so much ardor than Mary Carpenter. In a letter of his to Miss Carpenter in 1859 shortly before his death, Parker expressed profound admiration for Unitarian social improvement schemes in Bristol. He, she and her father shared a common liberal Unitarian faith. "Many things are called Christianity," he

wrote, ". . . sometimes it means burning men alive, in half the U.S.A. it means kidnapping, enslaving men and women."[40] But there was another kind of Christianity, Parker went on, "which your admirable father loved and thought and lived. . . . Piety, Morality, Love to God, Love to Man."[41] He was proud of Mary Carpenter because she had carried on her father's work. "It is this which I honor and love in you," he wrote, "especially as it takes the form of humanity and loves the Unlovely."[42] Both Parker and Carpenter shared the belief that:

> the greatest heroism of our day spends itself in lanes and alleys, in the haunts of poverty and crime seeking to bless such as the institution of the age can only curse. If Jesus of Nazareth were to come back and be the Jesus of London, I think I know what work he would set about. He would be a new Revolution of Institutions, applying his universal justice to the causes of the ill. . . . You are doing this work -- the work of humanity.[43]

Probably the earliest recorded evidence to suggest Parker's influence in Bengal can be found in a letter written to the American Unitarian by the Brahmo Rakhal Das Haldar dated October 6, 1856.[44] Theologically, the letter suggests that the Brahmo defense of intuition against revealed scriptural sources, an important issue in the 1850's, was in part derived from Parker's influence.[45] The letter also intimates that little if any direct communication had taken place between Bengali Brahmos and American Unitarians. Parker expressed surprise that Asians were so familiar with works by him and other American Unitarians. He promised to arrange for more of his volumes to be sent to Calcutta.

In 1858, Keshub Sen used Parker and Emerson as the basis of his own sermons.[46] Sivanath Sastri has also written that Parker was a very important influence on the younger Keshub.[47] In his autobiography, Banga Chandra Roy, the East Bengali Keshubite, reported that by 1863, Parker was being read widely among the Western-educated Brahmos of Dacca.[48] They also read English Unitarians such as Cobbe and Martineau.

One of the more interesting cases of Parker's influence in East Bengal was that of Durga Mohun Das of Barisal. In the early 1860's Das was a student at Presidency College, Calcutta, and under the influence of Professor E. B. Cowell, he decided to convert to trinitarian Christianity.[49] His brother, a pleader, interceded before baptism, sent Durga Mohun back to Barisal and urged him to read the complete works of Parker.[50] The reading of Parker in 1864-65 not only turned Durga Mohun away from Christianity but made him incline in favor of the Brahmo faith. Thus, when Bijoy Krishna came to Barisal in 1865 as Keshub's missionary to Bangla Desh, Das was already receptive to Brahmonism.[51]

Dwijidas Datta, a founder of the Sadharan Samaj and himself from Comillah, East Bengal, has written that by the mid-1860's, "the name of Theordore Parker was familiar to every Brahmo . . ."[52] By the time Sivanath Sastri turned to

resolve his feelings of remorse and guilt, Parker had evidently been translated into Bengali and was circulating widely throughout urban and rural Bengal.[53] The very sermons by Parker which Sastri profits from had been translated by Girish Chandra Mazumdar of Barisal in 1866. Interestingly enough, these sermons dealt with social issues in a religious context. Bengalis seemed receptive to Parker's equation that intimate love of God equalled love of all humanity.[54]

According to Sastri, so widespread was Parker's influence by the late 1860's, that Debendranath Tagore feared a whole new generation would become "contaminated" by Parker's philosophy.[55] Bipin Chandra Pal has also placed emphasis on Parker's enormous impact on Brahmo progressives. What precisely was the nature of the impact? Pal wrote:

> Sivanath Sastri and his generation imbibed the indominable spirit of freedom, liberalism and the love of universal humanity from Theodore Parker. It was doubtful whether they were in the least inspired by Parker's theology.[56]

It was not merely the young, in fact, who discovered Parker, and though for convenience sake we are inclined to speak of ideology in terms of a generational clash, this was not entirely the case. Sib Chandra Deb who was born in 1811 some eight miles from Calcutta on the Hughly River,[57] was hardly a young man when he turned to Parker in the 1850's. Deb was not only Debendranath Tagore's senior by six years but was one of the original students of Henry Derozio at Hindu College (1829-30).[58]

It is well worth discussing Sib Chandra Deb alongside Sivanath Sastri in the context of Parker's influence on Brahmos because lacking charisma he never achieved popularity but was, nevertheless, steadfastly liberal and represented the important infrastructure of the movement. Like Sastri, Deb came from a *sakto* family but unlike the former he was by caste a *kayastha* with a father employed by the British army as commisary clerk.[59] Sib Chandra learned English early spending six years at Hindu College (1824-31) both in the preparatory school and in the institution of higher learning.[60] He was a good student, established a brilliant record and earned scholarships.[61]

There is no record of any crisis of identity in the young man Deb. From graduation, he moved into the subordinate posts of the civil service and enjoyed a long, fruitful career mostly as a deputy collector in various West Bengal districts.[62] He was not only a rather Westernized young man but also one consistently rational and reformist. Again, his lack of flamboyance and charisma has earned him an inconspicuous place among the membership of Young Bengal. When Young Bengal ceased to be effective as an agency of reform, men like Deb looked to the Brahmo Samaj and its forum, the *Tattvabodhini Sabha*. Hardly surprising is the fact that Deb chose Akkhoy Kumar Dutt as his factional leader and the fact that he, the rationalist, became a Brahmo in 1850 after Debendranath agreed to drop the *Vedanta* as a revealed source in favor of natural religion.[63]

Interestingly enough, natural religion through intuition was close to Parker's own brand of Unitarian faith. On the other hand, like Debendranath and Keshub,

Sib Chandra was a pious man and devoted theist who believed strongly in the utility of prayer.[64] Deb seems to have represented some happy integration of liberal religion, social consciousness and the puritan ethic. In the Deb type of Brahmo, balance was an important value.[65] He was both spiritual and rationalist; he spent much time in devotion but was equally addicted to hard work. And, above all, he was a humanitarian Brahmo with a high ideal of social service.

Where Parker's influence was most felt from the late 1850's on, was in the area of social service. Brahmos like Deb and Sastri interpreted the social gospel of American Unitarianism at first to mean establishing institutions and voluntary associations for social amelioration. Sib Chandra turned to his native village, for example, and personally constructed there an English school for boys, a Bengali vernacular school for boys, a combination of the two schools for girls, a free public library, a post office, and a hospital for the entire community.[66] His girls' school completed in 1860 became one of the best of its kind in Bengal.[67]

Sivanath Sastri did the same thing in his uncle's native village of Harinavi. The influence of Parker is surely present here as well, but there was the additional influence of Vidyabhusan who published *Somprakash* in the village. Two liberal orientations came together at Haranavi: the progressive Unitarian tradition of Parker and the progressive Sanskrit College tradition of Vidyasagar. The result was not only the establishment of such institutions as a school and hospital, but also such practical civic improvements as clearing drains and repairing roads.[68] Such projects which were multiplied in the towns and villages of Bengal (mostly East Bengal) indicate that social improvement was often initiated not by zemindars nor the government but by middle class liberal individuals as in the case of Vidyabhusan or liberal associations as in the case of the Brahmo Samaj.

As early as 1870, a faction of social progressives had formed within Keshub's larger Brahmo organization held together ideologically by the Parker social gospel. In that year, Keshub favored the group and when he returned from England, started the Indian Reform Association. There was little in his behavior then to suggest that he would ultimately abandon the social gospel for comparative religion and the New Dispensation leaning heavily for support on the ascetic Brahmo faction. In the 1870's Keshub's views coincided nicely with those of Sastri, Deb, Das and other progressives.

In fact, just about the time Keshub announced formation of the Indian Reform Association, Sastri wrote an interesting tract articulating what he saw as the major principles of the Brahmo Samaj of India. He supported Keshub and the organization fully. His tract was a declaration of faith in the community of Brahmo brethren and sisters under Keshub's leadership who were seeking to propagate the "progressive religion" of Brahmoism.[69] Progressive religion was a cosmopolitan faith in the "whole human race," in the "growth and development of the human personality," and in social improvement through emancipation.[70] The last item was

in light of subsequent events, most significant of all:

> We look upon every form of denial of social and individual rights by individuals or classes, as impetus and reprehensible, and as such a proper field of increasing warfare for all true lovers of God.[71]

By 1872, perhaps earlier, the honeymoon between the progressives and Keshub seemed over. The one key issue which separated them, the most burning issue of the day, was female emancipation. Besides Parker, whose influence was less direct on this issue, there appeared on the Calcutta scene two British Unitarian ladies, Mary Carpenter and Annette Akroyd, whose impact on Brahmo social thought was profound.

Mary Carpenter, whom we have earlier noted to have been a British follower of Theodore Parker, was born in 1807 as the daughter of Rammohun Roy's Unitarian friend and associate, Lant Carpenter. Much of her mature life from 1831 on was spent as a pioneer social worker among the urban poor in England undergoing industrialization.[72] At first, it was the poverty-stricken people of Bristol whom she helped but later she extended her humanitarian concern to the Oliver Twist variety of ragged youth among the industrial proletariat.[73] As a spokesman of Parker's radical views on universal education, Carpenter was among the first social activists in Great Britain to provide reliable statistical information to Parliament on behalf of free compulsory education.[74]

One of Mary Carpenter's chief concerns was achieving equal rights for those of her own sex. In Victorian England, however advanced technologically and industrially, the majority of people still lived outside the pale of cultivated society as non-participants in modern civilization and as non-consumers in its fruits and benefits. Numerically, most conspicuous among the outsiders were the industrial proletariat and the women. Both groups were virtually slaves to the system without much legal protection or political power. Gradually, in religious movements such as the Unitarian Association and the Salvation Army, organized efforts by conscience stricken members of the elite, led to appreciable reforms endorsed by the courts and by Parliament.

As for women, besides being exploited in factories along with children as part of the proletariat, they also underwent humiliation and degradation in the form of virtual slavery known as prostitution. Lacking education, special training, and being barred from most respectable jobs before the invention of the typewriter, the Englishwoman without means in the job market had only prostitution or some very poorly-paid menial positions to choose from in order to survive. The Industrial Revolution in nineteenth-century England had not changed the traditionally callous disregard for the female as a human being. On the contrary, it may be argued that the squalor and suffering among the new class of the industrial poor in the new urban slums of England, only exacerbated the problem by brutalizing social life.

But on the more positive side, modernization also awakened a sense of shameful awareness of inhumanity by an increasing number of liberal-minded people in

good families and in high positions. Their combined efforts and shocking disclosures led, for instance, to the first enactment of an Age of Consent Bill in 1885. The following facts which the liberals brought to light to win support for the Bill, demonstrate not only how deplorable the situation was but how pervasive the new humanitarian consciousness had become:

> Girls over 13 lacked any legal protection whereas no policeman could enter a brothel to search for girls under 13. . . . Most of the girls were drugged . . . 8 million pounds a year traffic in selling young girls . . . 1/3 of the girls were seduced before 16. In London, there were 80,000 prostitutes. The tight square mile round Charing Cross harboured over 2,000 pimps. One in every 50 Englishwomen was a streetwalker . . . it cost 100 pounds to have a virgin seduced . . .[75]

Many of these women ended up in prison where conditions were evidently so bad as to defy the imagination. Prison reform was in fact one of Mary Carpenter's concerns and it was in the jails that she encountered the lower depths of female degradation and dedicated herself to rescuing and rehabilitating these women. Carpenter was among the earliest reformers to bring documented evidence to Parliament dramatizing the urgent need for prison improvement.[76] This is the proper context for understanding the purpose of her trip to India in 1875. She was simply extending her reformist activities on prison reform and other humanitarian concerns to a wider area which included South Asia. The prisons she left behind her in England were bad enough as was the fate of any Englishwoman unfortunate enough to be trapped behind the walls of an English prison. Perhaps in India prisons were worse.

It is important to see the problem of female emancipation in comparative perspective. Interestingly enough, even the well-known and well-respected Mary Carpenter was discriminated against professionally. In 1836, she wanted to give a paper at the British Scientific Association which was to meet in her native city of Bristol on aspects of social welfare and sociology. The Association replied that they "did not permit ladies even to be present at the meetings of the sections."[77] It was not until 1860 that she was permitted to give a paper at the yearly session.[78]

Unitarian ladies like Mary Carpenter and Francis P. Cobbe worked hard to improve the lot of the female by education and legislation. They sought to guarantee the equal rights of women. It was the combined efforts of such women and the sympathy of liberal men which got Parliament to pass a Married Women's Properties Act in 1858.[79] As educated females one of their primary objectives was to break the monopoly of men in institutions of higher learning which awarded degrees. It was no accident that the first modern college for women in England was the Bedford College of Manchester conducted by Unitarians.[80] Not until 1878 did Oxford establish a college for women, the first degree-awarding institution of its kind in the British Isles.[81]

These facts alone should suffice to suggest that the problem of extending equal rights to women was a world-wide phenomenon in the nineteenth century and not one restricted to traditional societies of Asia. During Mary Carpenter's first two trips to India, she met with Brahmos and urged them to help extend the humanitarian efforts in America and England at female emancipation to India.

Among her most devoted stalwarts in Bengal were the progressives in Keshub Sen's Brahmo organization. And among these, the most active exponent of her ideas was Keshub's former youthful enthusiast from Krishnagar, Monomohun Ghose. Ghose and Miss Carpenter had become warm friends in England when the former lived there from 1962-66. Monomohun and Satyenranath Tagore had gone together to London to compete for the ICS. Whereas Tagore had passed the exam and become a civil servant, Monomohun failed but later turned to law and became a successful barrister in Calcutta.[82]

Of the progressive group in the Brahmo Samaj, none perhaps was so Westernized in use of language, dress and habit as was Monomohun Ghose. This is a curious fact about his generation of moderate nationalists. One has only to consider his letters of alienation from England while studying there and the fact that the British discriminated against him for his race during the examination. Until the late 1870's and early 1880's, one can explain this apparent contradictory behavior in terms of a common rationalization used by Keshub himself that Providence dictated British rule of India. In a letter to Calcutta from London dated Febrary 9, 1863, Monomohun wrote that "we should thank God for being placed under so powerful and civilized a nation."[83]

There are probably no more revealing letters in existence about the alienated feelings of a Bengali abroad in London in the nineteenth century than those written by Monomohun Ghose. Ghose, who was initially Miss Carpenter's most radical exponent on female emancipation in India was equally radical in his acceptance of British cultural values, wrote home in 1962 how wasteful it was to work so unbelievable hard mastering a wide range of subjects befitting memebers of the English elite. "We have no other enjoyment or occupation but our studies," he wrote on August 18, 1862.[84] It was a grueling experience having to memorize every significant parcel of information on English language, literature and history -- all so alien to him.[85] Moreover, he was sick and tired of the regular "English diet of cold beef and ham."[86] In several places, the nostalgic Bengali yearned for the food of his own culture: "Oh! if only we could get macher jhal and bhat," was the refrain of a man who would on his return to Bengal gain the reputation for being among the most Anglicized of the intelligentsia in Calcutta.

Once after having visited a Tagore who had converted to Christianity and then fled to England where he lived as an expatriate, Ghose wrote home his dismay at having spent the day with a denationalized caricature. "Tagore," wrote Ghose, "is vain-glorious and regards himself more an Englishman than an Indian."[87] "He has gone so far as to ask Satyendranath and I to give up our Indian costumes and call ourselves Mr.," wrote the indignant Monomohun.[88] In these letters Ghose expressed a wide range of discontent living in this alien land. Even the climate bothered him as he complained of bath health and long

periods of mental anxiety. During the winter of 1862 he wrote home a letter which seems to have summed up his general despondent state of mind:

> I shall never be happy until I return home and see you all. Several reasons have conspired to make me unhappy in this country. It will please God to take me back to my native country so I may then enjoy peace of mind. The recollections of past days only extracts tears from my eyes. I am no longer the same in body and mind. If the task we have willingly undertaken had not been imposed upon us by the interests of a nation, I should not have thought it worth while to sacrifice my body and mind.[89]

Nevertheless, when Monomohun returned to Bengal in 1866, he promptly took on all the characteristics of an Anglicized Bengali *babu* in defiance of family relations and the Hindu society. In future years, whenever the local press sought to ridicule the denationalized Bengali, invariably the primary target they chose was Monomohun Ghose. Meanwhile, he remained a steadfast progressive as a Brahmo choosing Keshub in the schism of 1866 and Sastri in that of 1878.

When Mary Carpenter visited Calcutta in 1869 with a definite scheme for promoting female education, Ghose was among her most ardent supporters. Her most important proposal was the establishment of a Brahmo normal school to train female teachers for girls' schools. On both levels, she urged Brahmos to go beyond the usual domestic arts subjects for females and offer subjects that would stimulate their curiosity and develop their minds.[90] Keshub, with the backing of Ghose, Sastri, Deb and others, did start a normal school for women as part of the Indian Reform Association. In fact, most of the progressive Brahmos offered their services as teachers in the school.[91]

At the time, there was only one educational institution for young women in Calcutta, Bethune School, which Vidyasagar, Sastri's uncle Vidyabhusan, and other such liberals, had supported solidly for twenty years. Despite the conservative curriculum of the school which taught women domestic arts and a modicum of liberal education to make them better wives, the institution never received wide public support. In 1868, Miss Piggot, the headmistress, was forced to resign because she had brought Christ into the teaching materials thus exposing the girls to the dreaded alien faith.[92] In her own defense, she said that opposition developed over her decision to go beyond the usual stress on "needlework in the curriculum."[93]

By 1870, especially among Brahmo men, the issue was very sharply drawn between those who viewed female education as preparatory for the domestic bliss of the enlightened housewife and those who wanted women educated on the same basis as men including college instruction. Bengali reformers, Brahmo and otherwise, still held the notion first propagated widely in 1855 by Akkhoy Kumar Dutt and Vidyasagar, that Hindu social reform in Bengal must start with the emancipation of women. Because women played such a crucial role in shaping the character and thought of children, it was essential that they be educated properly. And yet, to the Brahmo progressives in 1870, nothing concrete had been done to accomplish that purpose.

At this point there entered the Calcutta scene a second British Unitarian lady named Annette Akroyd. Her father had been a liberal Unitarian industrialist from Birmingham who in 1849 supported the establishment of Bedford College which was among the earliest institutions providing higher learning for women.[94] We may recall the fact that this was the only such college for women in the British Isles before 1878. Annette received her degree from Bedford in 1863, devoted herself to social work and in 1865 helped establish a school for the women of the industrial proletariat.[95] As with Mary Carpenter, she saw herself as a follower of Theodore Parker's program of social action as an integral part of Unitarian religion.

Sometime in the early 1860's she met Monomohun Ghose with whom a deep friendship ensued. Thus, when Keshub Sen visited England in 1870, Annette Akroyd had already formed a favorable impression of Brahmo social reform which made her one of his most inspired listeners. She was especially receptive to one of Keshub's lectures when he urged educated Englishwomen to come to India and help free Indian women from their chains of ignorance and superstition. She recalled later how his lecture of August 14 had an "electrifying effect on us Victorian ladies."[96] No doubt important about her state of mind at the time was the fact that her father had died in 1869 leaving her with a "blankness and dreariness inexpressable."[97]

Annette reconsidered her life in England where she led a "boring life of moral classes, ragged school collections, balls, social engagements, visits, journeys to London and yearly trips to the seaside."[98] She came forward to answer Keshub's appeal arriving in Calcutta on October 25, 1872, where she was the house guest of Monomohun Ghose and his wife.[99] Mrs. Ghose incidentally, who had been an uneducated bride, spent the first several years of her married life as a student at Loretto School and College in Calcutta.[100] Monomohun had insisted upon it after returning from England.

The Brahmo progressives welcomed Annette as an ally within the community in their effort to achieve more equality for Brahmo women. In this endeavor, Keshub proved far more conservative than the progressives anticipated with the result that female emancipation became the hot issue of the 1870's that divided the Brahmo organization. One of the first incidents to force the issue to a head was the time Durga Mohun Das insisted that the ladies be permitted to sit with their families during services at the mandir. Because Keshub insisted that ladies sit behind screens, Das, Ghose, Sastri and the other progressives labeled the system purdah.[101] Joined by another fiery young Brahmo enthusiast named Dwarkanath Ganguli, the progressives demanded an end to the purdah system. Keshub stood firm at first arguing that women seated in the congregation would distract the men from their spiritual purpose but in the end he relented and provided seats outside the screen for "advanced" families.[102]

The problem of what girls should learn in school was not solved so easily. Here, Miss Akroyd played a leading part sarcastically distinguishing Keshub the rhetorician of women's liberation in England, from Keshub the typical Hindu male keeping the light of knowledge from the minds of women. Nowhere in the Indian Reform Association did Keshub allow females to study such male-monopolized

subjects as geometry, logic, natural science and history.[103] In fact, in the normal school, Keshub's executive committee and majority of faculty were of the non-progressive ascetic faction. Of the three-man executive committee which assisted Keshub Sen as president, only one, Umesh Chandra Dutt, the secretary, was progressive.[104] As for the faculty, Keshub carefully selected men who were non-westernized and traditionally Hindu in educational background -- men like Bijoy Krishna Goswami, Aghore Nath Gupta and Gour Govinda Ray.[105]

Keshub tried to convince Miss Akroyd, Ghose and Sastri that he was progressive but at the same time wary of radical change. To be sure, they all wanted women to be emancipated but it should be a gradual process and carried out chiefly by liberal Brahmo husbands. Keshub implored them to imagine the disastrous consequences of women so quickly released from the purdah-like situation in the Bengali household. "Go slow," he told the progressives and give women the inner strength with which to protect themselves.

In 1872, however, Miss Akroyd decided to start her own female school based on her own ideas and those of the progressives. Keshub was invited to join the committee which he did at first, but then withdrew his support consistently arguing the need to move gradually in the area of female emancipation.[106] Miss Akroyd disagreed both publically and privately. She had no patience with Keshub's gradualist methods which she openly labeled hypocritical. "I lost faith in Keshub Chandra Sen," said Miss Akroyd indignantly, "because of the contrast in him between preaching and personal practice."[107] Interestingly enough, Lord Beveridge, her future husband and a civil servant in Bengal for many years, explained Keshub's dismal failure as a reformer in terms of a certain defect in the Bengali character:

> The besetting sin of the Bengalees is that they will think and talk, talk and think, but that they will not act . . . that is the very reason we are here for if Bengalees could act half as well as they talk, there would be no reason for us Westerners to rule over them. We must, therefore, take them as we find them and do our best for them.[108]

But Annette Akroyd remained furious with Keshub whom she soon held to be hardly distinguishable from an orthodox Hindu since both sought to keep their women steeped in ignorance and child-like innocence. Her description of Mrs. Keshub Sen, for example, which was hardly a flattering profile for the wife of India's most reputed social reformer, was a devastating public exposure of an unemancipated Hindu woman. Miss Akroyd was "shocked" when she finally met Mrs. Sen. She had expected to meet someone as well-educated and sophisticated as Mrs. Monomohun Ghose, but instead found "that the wife of the great apostle of women's emancipation in India was ignorant of England."[109] But worse, she found Mrs. Sen "covered by a barbaric display of jewels, playing with them like a foolish petted child in place of attempting rational conversation. . . ."[110]

Keshub countered with two types of arguments: a continued defense of his "go slow" policy and a warning about "denationalized" female education in Bengal. In April, 1873 at a prize-awarding ceremony in his own normal school for women,

Keshub warned "how delicate and difficult is the work of female emancipation and if sufficient care is not taken, the experiment might prove harmful and dangerous."[111] He reiterated his own dismay with the bad effects of keeping women in "ignorance and seclusion" while at the same time justifying his gradualism not as conservatism but as good sense. "Before they share the privileges of society," he said, "they must have sufficient moral training and intellectual capacity."[112] Keshub pointed to the grim image of the "Indian males, even the educated classes who do not possess right notions about the other sex and do not know how to protect women in society."[113]

Keshub's second line of attack dealt with Annette Akroyd's Anglicized curriculum and suggested personal habits for Bengali girls which he attributed to her ignorance of Bengali culture. Whatever good she intended to accomplish in her school the end result would be to denationalize Indian women. Miss Akroyd had proposed "the adoption of petticoats with the preservation of the remaining upper part of the dress."[114] Thus she reasoned, "a compromise would be reached between indecency and denationalization -- and both secured against."[115] Progressives like Monomohun Ghose had supported her but Keshub treated her proposal with contempt.[116] For Keshub, Miss Akroyd did not care in the least for indigenous customs nor for the "Bengali modes of thinking."[117] In his mind, all this bother about clothing only proved that Miss Akroyd confused female emancipation with Westernized habits and customs.

Miss Akroyd's school opened on September 18, 1873 as the *Hindu Mohila Vidyalaya* (school for Hindu women) with Dwarkanath Ganguli as headmaster.[118] The move represented the first serious rupture between the progressives and Keshub constituting a decisive step in the direction of ultimate schism. Two months before classes opened in the new school, Lord Beveridge had written to Annette that:

> I see you have broken with Keshub Chandra Sen. I expect he is too fluent a speaker to be a great doer.[119]

Sivanath Sastri has implied in his *History of the Brahmo Samaj* that with the establishment of the Vidyalaya, the progressive or "liberal" Brahmos formed themselves into a semi-autonomous group.[120] These same Brahmos paid most of the school's expenses as well, although the greater proportion of that came out of the pockets of three fairly-well-to-do East Bengali liberals: Ananda Mohun Bose, Durga Mohun Das and Dwarkanath Ganguli.[121] In November, 1874 the progressives formally constituted themselves as the "*Samadarshi* (liberal) Party" and started a journal of their own called by that name with Sivanath Sastri as editor.[122]

The female emancipation issue so angered Brahmos that by 1874 Keshub found himself forcing liberals out of his educational institutions or accepting letters of protest and resignation. Sastri himself resigned his teaching position at the girls' school to become headmaster of the South Suburban School in Bhwanipur.[123] The same issue created bad feelings in the Brahmo living quarters or *Bharat Ashram* which came to a head with Keshub's decision to expel a liberal family.[124]

In 1875 Miss Akroyd became Mrs. Beveridge which meant in effect that she had to give up the school. For diplomatic reasons, perhaps, her husband urged her to reconcile differences with Keshub Sen whom he "believed to be a good man."[125] He also warned his wife not to become "too much identified with the Anglicized Bengalees."[126] In this category Beveridge included Mr. and Mrs. Monomohun Ghose:

> I have nothing to say against Mr. and Mrs. Ghose, who were kind to me, but I do not believe that they represent the best section of Young Bengal or that Bengal will eventually follow in the track they are going.[127]

The arrival of Mary Carpenter on her third and last visit to India not only saved Annette Akroyd's school but prompted the adoption of a more ambitious scheme to train Indian women for higher education. With the active backing of the *Samadarshi* party of Brahmos, the first women's liberal arts college in India was established known as the *Bangiya Mohila Vidyalaya* (Bengali women's college).[128] Three years later this institution was merged with Bethune to become Bethune College and immediately won the recognition and fiancial support of the government.

The year 1878 was indeed a bad year for Keshub. At the same time the government decided to back the liberals and Bethune College, they withdrew financial support from his own female normal school, which had continued to restrict its curriculum to the domestic arts.[129] This was the year that the liberals finally brought on the long-awaited schism in Brahmo ranks leading to the formation of the Sadharan Samaj. Considering the fact that female emancipation was the hot issue of the 1870's, it should come as no surprise that the exciting cause for the schism was Keshub's marriage of his eldest female child to the Cooch Behar Maharaja.

Despite his growing unpopularity with liberal social reformers, Keshub continued to voice his opinion against "alien" ideas about advanced education for Indian women. In opposition to the Bethune College merger, he charged that its objective was to "Europeanize the girls. . . ."[130] To Keshub, in an editorial of February 25, 1878, a distinction should be made but was not being made by the founders of Bethune College, between Anglicizing Indian women and emancipating them. At Bethune College, the women would learn "to wear European costumes and to adopt European habits in eating and drinking."[131] "This may be progress in the estimation of a few go-ahead reformers," wrote Keshub, "but it is a progress of a very doubtful character."[132] It certainly "has no value in the eyes of the true well-wishers of the country."[133] Keshub concluded that:

> We have no desire to make Europeans of our ladies. . . . To denationalize them will be grievous misfortune to our country. . . . The Lt. Governor should consult the parents of the Hindu community. . . . To Europeanize ourselves in our external habits and manners is one thing, and to regenerate ourselves is another thing.[134]

The Sadharan Samajists replied to Keshub in their own newly-formed journal, *Brahmo Public Opinion*. In an editorial of July 4, 1878, presumably written collectively, the opening observation was made that Keshub had joined the growing legion of Hindu revivalists and militants who had nothing but contempt for things Western. Keshub was identified with a "sort of mania at present raging among our countryment on the question of nationality."[135] Everything "European is looked upon with perfect horror." The real issue was whether Indian women were to achieve freedom or not. In "ancient times our women enjoyed the highest liberality but lost that privilege with the Mohammedan conquest." The Sadharan Brahmos went on to argue that if India wants again to raise the status of its women, it must follow the lead of the Western nations. They denied aping western customs. Keshub was wrong about the purpose of having their girls use English dress for "all we have done at the *Vidyalaya* is adopted a dress for the girls that combines the elegance of the national dress with the decency of the European."[136]

This was an interesting editorial not only in the way Keshub was being answered, but as a document expressing the practical difficulty of distinguishing "modernization" from "westernization" in this king of institutional operation. Even Keshub's charge about food or the means of taking food had to be rationalized by the Sadharan Brahmos in these terms. "No doubt that our girls dine on tables and use spoons and forks," the editorial went on, "but it is because they find it convenient and decent to do so." Then, as a counter blast against Keshub's own eating habits: "so do several of our own pseudo reformers when they go to the Great Eastern Hotel on the sly." Has that made them "Europeanized?" Finally, the vital concern about meat was brought up in the editorial and defended not as a food that would denationalize the girls but as one that "makes them healthy and civilized members of society." The final passage is most significant for its plea against socio-cultural sectarianism directed against Keshub Sen, the leading contemporary spokesman for eclecticism and universalism:

> Why should we not take what we find good and socially and morally acceptable in the Western nations? We say it is blind perverse nationality which despises what is good and of steady merit in any other nationality. Truth is truth in all nationalities, religions and creeds.[137]

Keshub's opposition fell on the deaf ears of the government which applauded the official opening of the Bethune College in 1879.[138] The cooperation of two progressive Brahmos was instrumental in accomplishing the merger and establishing the college on a firm footing: Dwarkanath Ganguli who was headmaster of the Bidyalaya and Monomohun Ghose who was secretary of the Bethune School.[139] The Sadharan progressives also petitioned the government to affiliate Bethune with Calcutta University so that the girls could be awarded B.A. degrees.[140] The first two recipients of a degree were Miss Kadambini Bose, a Brahmo, and Miss Chandra Mulik Bose, a Christian.[141] Interestingly enough, as already intimated, Oxford University, the earliest secular institution of higher learning to award degrees to women in the British Isles, did so in 1878-79 at roughly the same time that Bethune College became an accredited affiliate of Calcutta

University. Thus, when the two Bengali women received their degrees in 1882, they became the first women graduates in the entire British empire.[142]

It was a great victory for the Sadharan Samajists and a great defeat for Keshub Sen. Keshub's unwillingness to compromise on the crucial issue of women's rights cost him the loyalty of the more dynamic and progressive forces within the Brahmo organization who rebelled openly against his authority when he married off his 14-year old girl to the tribal prince of a backward princely state. The "Protest of twenty-three Anusthanic Brahmos of Calcutta" against Keshub's "hypocrisy" about women's rights destroyed Brahmo unity forever and diminished his effectiveness as prophet of the New Dispensation. Signing the document were former friends, associates and disciples such as Sivanath Sastri, Sib Chandra Deb, Monomohun Ghose, Ananda Mohun Bose and Bijoy Krishna Goswami. As Keshub and his ascetic disciples continued their lonely intellectualized quest for a universal religion, the Sadharan Brahmos expanded their efforts to emancipate their women. Miss Bose, for example, turned to medicine and became the first Western-trained Indian woman physician with an M.D. from Edinburgh.

FOOTNOTES

1. S. Sastri, *Men I Have Seen: Reminiscences of Seven Great Bengalis* (Calcutta: Modern Review Office, 1919), p. 33.

2. S. Sastri, *Atma-carita* (Kalikata: Signet Press, n.d.), pp. 20, 27.

3. S. Sastri, *Men I Have Seen*, p. 34.

4. *Freedom Movement in Bengal*, ed. N. Sinha (Calcutta: Government of West Bengal, 1968), p. 84.

5. B. B. Majumdar, *History of Political Thought From Rammohan to Dayananda* (Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1934), Vol. I, pp. 21-25.

6. S. Sastri, *Atma-carita*, p. 41.

7. H. C. Sarkar, *Sivanath Sastri* (Calcutta: Ram Mohan Ray Publication Society, 1929), pp. 4-5.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 5; Sastri, *Atma-carita*, p. 42.

9. B. N. Bandyapadhyay, *Dwarkanath Vidyabhusan* (Kalikata: Bangiya sahitya parishat, 1956), pp. 6-9.

10. Sastri, *Men I Have Seen*, p. 125.

11. Sastri, *Atma-carita*, p. 57.

12. S. Devi, *Sivanath* (Kalikata: Sadharan brahmo samaj, 1966), p. 47; H. C. Sarkar, *Sivanath Sarkar*, p. 7.

13. Sastri, *Atma-carita*, p. 68.

14. *Ibid.*

15. *Ibid.*

16. *Ibid.*

17. Sastri, *Men I Have Seen*, p. 127.

18. C. Sarkar, *Sivanath Sarkar*, p. 14.

19. *Ibid.*

20. *Ibid.*

21. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

22. *Ibid.*

23. S. Devi, *Sivanath*, p. 47.

24. *Ibid.*, p. 51.

25. H. C. Sarkar, *Sivanath Sarkar*, p. 9.

26. Devi, p. 52.

27. Sastri, *Men I Have Seen*, p. 56.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 55.

29. *Ibid.*

30. Devi, p. 47.

31. J. T. Sunderland, "Theodore Parker: The Great American Reformer," *Modern Review*, LXII (July, 1937), pp. 2-12.

32. W. H. Channing, *Lessons from the Life of Theodore Parker* (London: Edward T. Whitfield, 1860), pp. 25-26.

33. T. Parker, *The Public Education of the People* (Boston: William Crosby and H. P. Nichols, 1850), p. 10.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

35. *Ibid.*

36. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

37. T. Parker, *A False and True Revival of Religion* (Boston: William L. Kent & Co., 1858), p. 11.

38. *Ibid.*

39. *Ibid.* See also T. Parker, *The Revival of Religion Which We Need* (Boston: William L. Kent & Co., 1858).

40. J. E. Carpenter, *The Life and Work of Mary Carpenter* (London: MacMillan & Co., 1879), p. 260.

41. *Ibid.*

42. *Ibid.*

43. *Ibid.*

44. Letter from T. Parker to Rakhal Das Haldar, October 6, 1856, *Rakhal Das Haldar Papers* (Rabindra Bhaban, Visva-Bharati University, Santineketan, West Bengal).

45. *Ibid.*

46. P. C. Mazoomdar, *The Life and Teachings of Keshub Chander Sen* (Calcutta: Baptist Mission Press, 1887), pp. 99, 106.

47. S. Sastri, *History of the Brahmo Samaj* (Calcutta: R. Chatterjie, 1911), Vol. I, p. 118.

48. B. C. Ray, *The Story of My Humble Life* (Dacca: East Bengal Press, 1913), p. 21.

49. Sastri, *History of Brahmo Samaj*, Vol. II, p. 361.

50. *Ibid.*

51. *Ibid.*, p. 365.

52. D. Datta, *Keshub and the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj* (Calcutta: Nabasidhan press, 1930), p. 58.

53. T. Parker, *Prarthana-Mala*, trans. into Bengali by G. C. Mazumdar (Kalikata: Prenranjam mazumdar, 1866).

54. *Ibid.*, pp. 1, 3, 15, 18, 31-33.

55. S. Sastri, *Maharsi Devendranath O Brahmamanda Keshub Chandra* (Kalikata: Sadhan-ashram, 1910), p. 4.

56. B. C. Pal, *Carita-Citra* (Kalikata: Yugayatri prokashak lt., 1950), p. 263.

57. A. T. Sen-Shastri, *Sivachandra O bangalar unabingsha satabdi* (Kalikata: Saharan Brahmo Samaj, 1970), p. 51.

58. *Life of Grish Chander Ghose*, ed. M. N. Ghose (Calcutta: R. Cambray & Co., 1911), pp. 39, 44.

59. "Death of Sivachandra Deb," *Indian Messenger*, VII (November 16, 1890), p. 83.

60. *Life of Grish Chander Ghose*, p. 37.

61. *Ibid.*, p. 38.

62. *Ibid.*, pp. 44, 45, 46.

63. A. T. Sen-Sastri, p. 58.

64. *Ibid.*, pp. 39-40.

65. *Ibid.*, p. 45.

66. *Ibid.*, pp. 54-55; *Life of Grish Chander Ghose*, p. 48.

67. *Ibid.*

68. S. Devi, pp. 52, 54.

69. S. Sastri, *The Brahmo Samaj of India: A Statement of Its Religious Principles* (London: British and Foreign Unitarian Association, n.d.), p. 5.

70. *Ibid.*

71. *Ibid.*

72. For an authentic study of her background, see J. E. Carpenter.

73. M. Carpenter, *On Ragged Schools* (Birmingham: Benjamin Hall, 1861).

74. *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.

75. R. Collier, *The General Next to God* (London: Fantana Paperback, 1968), p. 111-114.

76. M. Carpenter, *Letters on Female Education in India and Prison Discipline* (Bristol: I. Arrowsmith, 1877), p. 273.

77. J. E. Carpenter, p. 273.

78. *Ibid.*

79. "Funeral of Francis Paimer Cobbe," *The World and the New Dispensation*, XIV (June 19, 1904), p. 46.

80. Lord W. H. Beveridge, *India Called Them* (London: George Unwin Ltd., 1947), p. 78.

81. *Ibid.* See also "Lady's College Established at Oxford," *Brahmo Public Opinion*, II (May 8, 1879), p. 73.

82. S. Sastri, *Ramtanu Lahiri O tatkalin bangar samaj* (Kalikata: Near age publishers ltd., 1957 [ed.]), p. 308.

83. Letter from M. Ghose to G. Tagore, February 9, 1863, in Correspondence of Manomohan Ghose, *Tagore Family Papers* (Rabindra Bhaban, Visva-Bharati University, Santineketan, West Bengal).

84. M. Ghose to G. Tagore, August 18, 1862.

85. *Ibid.*

86. *Ibid.*

87. M. Ghose to G. Tagore, May 17, 1862.

88. *Ibid.*

89. M. Ghose to G. Tagore, December 2, 1862.

90. M. Carpenter, *Addresses to the Hindus* (Calcutta: Newman & Co., 1867), p. 13.

91. S. Chaudhury, "Victoria institutioner eksho bochar," *Victoria Christian College Patrika* (May, 1969), p. 63.

92. "Bethune Female School," *National Paper*, IV (May 13, 1868), pp. 241-243.

93. *Ibid.*, p. 243.

94. Beveridge, pp. 65, 78.

95. *Ibid*, p. 82.

96. *Ibid.*

97. *Ibid.*, pp. 80-81.

98. *Ibid.*, p. 79.

99. *Ibid.*, p. 88.

100. S. Sastri, *Ramtanu Lahiri*, p. 308.

101. _____, *The New Dispensation and the Brahmo Samaj* (Madras: vijavharathar-unjinee press, 1881), p. 22.

102. In the light of contemporary female liberation consciousness about the attitude of "male chauvinism" it is interesting to relate that no one in the Brahmo Congregation concerned themselves with whether men would distract women from their spiritual purpose.

103. S. Chaudhury, p. 64. B. Bandyopadhyay, *Dwarkanath Gangopadhyay* (Kalikata: Bangiya sahitya parishat, 1964), p. 12.

104. S. Chaudhury, p. 62.

105. *Ibid.*, p. 63.

106. Beveridge, p. 89.

107. *Ibid.*

108. *Ibid.*, p. 96.

109. *Ibid.*, p. 89.

110. *Ibid.*

111. K. C. Sen, "Native Ladies 'Normal School'," *Brahmo Samaj Chronicle* (April 8, 1873), in Sophia Dobson Collet Collection, Sadharan Samaj Library, Calcutta, n.p.

112. *Ibid.*

113. *Ibid.*

114. Beveridge, p. 90.

115. *Ibid.*

116. *Ibid.*

117. K. C. Sen, "Native Ladies 'Normal School'."

118. B. Bandyopadhyay, *Dwarkanath Gangopadhyay*, pp. 12, 13.

119. Beveridge, p. 99.

120. S. Sastri, *History of Brahmo Samaj*, Vol. I, p. 258.

121. *Ibid.*

122. *Ibid.*

123. S. Devi, p. 57.

124. S. Sastri, *History of Brahmo Samaj*, pp. 252, 253.

125. Beveridge, p. 100.

126. *Ibid.*

127. *Ibid.*

128. H. C. Sarkar, *Life of Ananda Mohan Bose* (Calcutta: A. C. Sarkar, 1910), p. 99.

129. S. Chaudhury, pp. 66-67.

130. K. C. Sen, "Calcutta Bethune School," *Indian Mirror*, XVII (February 25, 1878), p. 3.

131. *Ibid.*

132. *Ibid.*

133. *Ibid.*

134. *Ibid.*

135. "Banga-Mohila Vidyalaya," *Brahmo Public Opinion*, I (July 4, 1878), p. 163.

136. *Ibid.*, p. 164.

137. *Ibid.*

138. P. C. Gangopadhyay, *Banglar Nari Jagaran* (Kalikata: Sadharan Brahma Samaj, 1946), p. 75.

139. "Banga-Mahila Vidyalaya," *Brahmo Public Opinion*, p. 164.

140. P. C. Gangopadhyay, pp. 66-67.

141. *Calcutta Corresponding Committee of the Church Missionary Society*, 63rd Report, 1883 (Calcutta: Church Mission Press, 1883), xx, xxii.

142. P. C. Gangopadhyay, p. 77.

V. THE IDEALS OF INDIAN WOMANHOOD: SIX BENGALI WOMEN DURING THE INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT

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Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay, one of India's famous freedom fighters, claimed that the "women's movement" did not aim at the establishment of a new order, but wanted to "revive and regain" lost glory while adjusting to modern conditions.[1] Kamaladevi's statement controverts the widely held notion that women's movements in so-called "traditional" societies necessarily result in social revolution.[2] Between 1905 and 1947 large numbers of Indian women participated in "social service" organizations (for the amelioration and improvement of the lot of women) and political activities (picketing, marching, disobeying orders, assisting revolutionary groups) without perceiving themselves as social revolutionaries or being treated as such by society. In this paper I would like to argue that the women's movement in modern India, seen through specific examples of Bengali women, did not cause women to depart from defined "femininity." The definition of femininity was changing and women themselves were the major contributors to this redefinition.

The inspiration for the women's movement of the twentieth century came from many sources. Extremely important among these were efforts to bring about social reform. There were many individuals in the 19th century who attacked customs which were detrimental to the status of women - *sati*, female infanticide, and prohibitions on widow remarriage and education for females - because they seemed irrational. Rammohun Roy and Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar are invariably mentioned as champions of women's rights. While they voiced their opposition to certain customs, they were careful to explain the conflict between custom and traditional religious law. They proved that customs such as *sati* and prohibitions against widow remarriage had the sanction of neither religion nor reason.

While widow remarriage never received popular approval, education for girls gradually gained acceptance. Until the mid-nineteenth century, the only girl's schools in Bengal were those run by missionaries. These attracted few middle-class girls because of the religious training, the traditional prejudices against female education and the conception of Western education as intrinsically related to employment.[3] In the second half of the century the opportunities were greatly expanded. Drinkwater Bethune, with the help of

Vidyasagar, opened a school in 1849 to provide a secular education for girls; government grants-in-aid became available after 1854; the Brahmo Samaj supported schools and "education at home" schemes; and members of the orthodoxy supported schools which would train girls (who arrived and left in closed carriages) in arithmetic, cooking and house-wifery, and religion.[4] By 1879 the Universities at Calcutta, Bombay and Madras had been forced to open their doors to female candidates.

The Brahmo Samaj played the leading role in bringing women into public life. Recognizing the strength of purdah, the Brahmos had set up the *Antapur Stri Siksha Sabha* in 1863 to educate women within their homes. But they were also the first to encourage their womenfolk to attend religious ceremonies and social gatherings and it was Brahmo women who first adopted a style of wearing the *sari* that would be functional for such occasions. The *Bamabodhini Patrika*, a magazine for women begun in 1864, gave encouragement to literary activity and provided a forum for news of women's welfare activities. The following year the *Bramika Samaj* was organized to bring women together to discuss various topics for self-improvement.[5] The number of organizations increased rapidly and women began to take the lead in organizing and in choosing the topics to be discussed.

But social reform arguments, schools for girls and organizations for women never completely convinced the orthodox members of Hindu society that women had a place outside the home. I think this was achieved by the "Revivalists" who were responsible for initiating women, accepting women as spiritual gurus and establishing "social service" as a legitimate way of serving God.

Ramakrishna's respect for the spirituality of women is evidenced by his acceptance of Bhairani Brahmani as his guru and his wife, Sarada Devi, as his disciple. Rather lyrically, a contributor to the *Holy Mother Birth Centenary Volume* summed up Ramakrishna's impact:

> The age-old spiritual ideal of Indian womanhood has begun to glow over again with a fresh lustre before it could be snuffed out by the blast of modern materialism. By worshipping and realizing the goddess Kali, by accepting a highly gifted, devout woman as spiritual guide, by offering ritualistic homage at the feet of his own wife and by regarding all women, high or low, as the Divine Mother, Sri Ramakrishna raised the ideal to an unprecedented height of glory. To crown all, he left for all the world to visualize this splendid ideal, a perfect model in the person of his immaculate spiritual consort, Shri Sarada Devi, known to the devotees as the Holy Mother.[6]

According to this author, an examination of the Holy Mother's life will reveal all the elements that will elevate women to their rightful dignified position in society: "spotless purity, humility, absolutely selfless motherly tenderness, service, forbearance, compassion and . . . one-pointed devotion to God."[7]

Swami Vivekananda welcomed women devotees to the Ramakrishna Mission and frequently expressed his thoughts on women's education. He greatly admired the education and mobility of American women, yet thought they lacked morality and spirituality. Indian women must be educated, he agreed, but through a system aimed at development of the "ideal woman" with the virtues of purity, compassion, contentment, renunciation and service.[8] Thus women would retain all the traditional values while engaged in the study of science, civic work or social reform.[9]

By the end of the century, faith in imitating British forms had disappeared as had support for reforms because they were "rational" or "scientific." Changes in Hindu society were proposed because they were consistent with Ancient Hinduism. With Hindu Revivalism came the firm conviction that one could serve God through "social service" or through service to the Motherland and the acceptance of the female as spiritually capable of attaining great heights. By this time the Brahmo Samaj and the Christian missionaries had educated a significant number of females, had brought women into public life and had fitted them with clothing they might wear outside the home.

These different and somewhat contradictory sources provided the inspiration for the women's movement in twentieth century Bengal. The wedding of the idea that women were the key to progress with the idea that a woman could be devoted to her country and work to free it without losing her traditional values was of great importance in bringing women into public life. Women entered the scene in 1905, their numbers increasing radically in 1920 and again in 1930.

The following sketches of six Bengali women[10] involved in "social service" and political activities during the Independence Struggle help to illustrate the extent to which they and their contemporaries regarded their activities as legitimate for "true Indian women."

Sarojini Naidu (1870-1949), the "Nightingale" of the Nationalist Movement, was a Bengali by birth. She grew up in Hyderabad where her scientist father taught at the Nizam's University. At age sixteen she went to England to study, received considerable praise for her poetry and returned to marry a South Indian medical doctor in 1898.

Influenced by the "suffragist"[11] movement in England, she soon became active in organizations to promote women's education and political activities. In 1917 she led the delegation that met with Lord Montagu to demand the extension of the franchise to women. Parliament shirked the issue by declaring women's franchise a domestic concern; the franchise was awarded to women by the individual provinces between 1921 and 1929.[12] Comparing the ease with which Indian women gained the franchise with the difficulty experienced by English women, Sarojini concluded,

> with us it was not the coming for the first time to a new consciousness of the ideals of service, but only a re-awakening and rekindling of that consciousness. It was a re-awakening and rekindling of consciousness in the minds of men of India who had never by word or deed put any difficulties in the way of women of India, or obstacles in the way of their claim for 'advancement and emancipation.'[13]

Closely associated with both Margaret Cousins and Annie Besant, Sarojini Naidu joined the Home Rule League in 1918.[14] Her tendency to be in the forefront of nationalist activity continued and in 1919 she became one of the first to take the pledge of non-cooperation.[15] Once she had accepted Gandhi as her leader, Sarojini became a loyal lieutenant and inspired other women to join the movement. In 1925 she served as the first Indian female President of the Indian National Congress. In her Presidential speech, she expressed her belief that women's problems could not be satisfactorily solved until the country were free.[16] Women were encouraged to join Congress and work for political independence that would ultimately be the vehicle for social change.

Nominated by Gandhi to join in the Dandi salt march and the raid on Dharsana salt works, she accepted her task eagerly. Urging other women to join, she said, "the time has come in my opinion when women can no longer seek immunity behind the shelter of their sex, but must share equally with their men comrades all the perils and sacrifices for the liberation of the country."[17] But this was not to be seen as a departure from tradition, "During the far off yesterdays of our history, it was the sacred duty of our womenhood to kindle and sustain the fires of hearth and altar, to light the beacon lights, and we are today again awake and profoundly aware of our splendid destiny."[18]

Sarojini was very effective in mobilizing women for "social service" activities. Co-founder, with Margaret Cousins, of the All-India Womens Conference, Sarojini encouraged women to join and work with orphans, illiterates, widows, the poor and untouchables. Only in this way could Indian women combine in themselves,

> Laksmi, the giver of happiness and prosperity;
> Saraswati, the embodiment of wisdom, and Parvati,
> the eternal Mother who uplifts the fallen, purifies
> the sinner, gives hope to the despairing, strength
> to the weak, and courage to the coward, and recreates
> in man the divine energy.[19]

According to Sarojini Naidu, women who demanded the franchise for women, accompanied Gandhi on marches, served with the Indian National Congress, made public speeches and worked for social improvement could embody the ancient ideals of Indian womanhood. And it is to Sarojini's credit that she was able to take an active role in the Nationalist Movement and never be considered "unfeminine"[20] or un-Indian. A reminiscence of her reads,

> This was Sarojini and lotus-like . . . and when
> one reached the heart amid all the talents of an
> intellectual, a patriot, a poetess of merit, a
> teacher, a golden-voiced orator, who fought with
> the faith of a great Joan of Arc and the valour
> of a Rani or Jhansi, and above all a good and lovely
> wife and mother, did one find the true essence of
> perfect womanhood.[21]

Sarojini Naidu had been active in the social and political organizations of her time and had encouraged many women to enter public life. She and the women who followed her were accepted by their society as good Indian women. Sarojini had succeeded, she had convinced her society, through speeches and personal behavior, that these activities were consistent with the activities of Indian women in a glorious "golden age."

Basanti Das (b. 1880) serves as an example of a woman who joined the political movement as her husband's helpmate and in doing so proved remarkably effective in soliciting support for non-cooperation. Married to Chittaranjan Das in 1897, Basanti Devi became her husband's constant companion and supporter of his work.

After the Nagpur Conference and adoption of non-cooperation as a Congress program, Chittaranjan decided to give up his successful law practice and devote his life to politics. Basanti Devi supported him in this decision and immediately began a tour of Bengal to introduce *Charkha* to women and encourage them to join the non-cooperation movement and donate their money and jewelry to the cause. In Calcutta she and her sister-in-law, Urmila Devi, hawked *khadi* in the streets and encouraged people to join the hartal planned for December 24, 1921. Before long these two women, members of a highly respected household, were arrested.

The impact was great. "The arrest of Basanti Devi had an electric effect on the people. Immediately more than a thousand young men offered themselves for arrest."[22] It was reported that when Basanti Devi and her companions were being taken to jail, the police constables saluted and vowed to resign their posts and factory workers offered themselves for arrest.[23] Several eminent barristers expressed their violent objection to the arrest and humiliation of Basanti Devi to the Viceroy, Lord Reading.[24] It was the arrest of this woman -- honored and respected in her society -- that helped to account for the fact that of the 25,000 people who courted arrest in 1921, 17,000 of them were from Bengal.

When Chittaranjan was arrested in 1921, Basanti Devi was asked to preside over the Bengal Provincial Congress meeting to be held in Chittagong in April of 1922. She took her husband's place but as a substitute, not as an individual with political ambitions of her own. After the death of her husband in 1925, Basanti Devi retired from politics despite the pleas of Subhas Chandra Bose who considered her a source of inspiration and an astute politician. Subhas' insistence that only her leadership could heal the factionalism then plaguing the party in Bengal was not enough to convince her to stay.[25]

Basanti Devi exemplifies another pattern of women's involvement in the Independence Movement. Her inspiration was her husband, the activities she engaged in were associated with his activities, and her involvement ceased with his death. Yet, she was more than a shadow. She has been portrayed by her contemporaries as a woman of great courage and intelligence who was capable of inspriing many to join the non-cooperation movement. Her contribution to the Independence Movement cannot be denied yet Basanti Devi was admired as truly feminine.

Bina Das (b. 1911) is one of the most famous revolutionaries even though her tenure with the revolutionary party was short. The attempt to shoot the Governor of Bengal earned her much publicity but none of it was negative. Like Sarojini Naidu and Basanti Devi, Bina Das was honored by her society.

Her father, Benimadhab Das, was a Brahmo leader and close friend of Keshub Chandra Sen. From him Bina received her early education in patriotism. Reared on her father's stories of ancient Indian heroes and her mother's efforts to help distressed women by teaching them marketable sewing skills,[26] Bina had concrete role models for heroism and selfless service.

In 1921 Benimadhab's household joined the non-cooperation movement. *Charkha* was introduced, the women began to wear *Khadi* and political discussions became more frequent. At this time Bina read Sarat Chandra Chatterjee's novel *Pather Dabee* and was deeply affected by the vivid portrayal of the privations, great sufferings, determination and self-sacrifice of the revolutionaries. She vowed then to devote her life to the cause of freedom.

At Bethune College, Bina and her elder sister, Kalyani, led the student movement. Kalyani's *Chatri Sangha*, composed of girls from different schools, joined the women's wing of the Congress Volunteer Corps in 1928. Following the Congress session Bina was asked to join the revolutionaries. She accepted, transferred to Diocesian College and gave up all outward forms of *Swadeshi*. Her first tasks were very simple, spreading propaganda among her fellow students and soliciting their support, but disheartening because so few girls were seriously concerned about the British presence.

News of British reprisals against the revolutionaries troubled Bina.[26] When she heard reports that the citizens of Chittagong were brutalized after the Armory Raid, she decided on her dramatic act. Her victim was to be the Governor of Bengal, Sir Stanley Jackson; the occasion, the Calcutta University Convocation ceremony. On August 6, 1932 Bina Das shot at Governor Jackson, missed him and was immediately arrested.

Her confession is important for its clear exposition of her role as a woman in the struggle for freedom. Commenting on her decision to shoot the Governor, she wrote,

> I had been thinking - is life worth living in an India, so subject to wrong and continually groaning under the tyranny of a foreign government or is it not better to make one supreme protest against it by offering one's life away? Would not the immolation of a daughter of India and of a son of England awaken India to the sin of its acquiescence to its continued state of subjection and England to the iniquities of its proceedings. . . . All these [sufferings of the people] and many others worked on my feelings and worked them into a frenzy. The pain became unbearable and I felt as if I would go mad if I could not find relief in death. I only sought the way to death by offering myself at the feet of my country and invite the attention of all by my death to the situation created by the measures of the Government, *which can unsex even a frail woman like myself, brought up in all the best tradition of Indian womanhood.*[28]

Sentenced to nine years imprisonment, Bina was saved from transportation to the Andamans by the petitions of C. F. Andrews and Rabindranath Tagore. She was released in March of 1939 but was unable to go abroad to study because of the war. Once again Bina turned to the nationalist cause but this time she joined the All India Congress. She worked to organize women laborers in a Tollygung rice mill, then began touring the countryside to solicit support for Congress. Somewhat disappointed in her efforts to attract a new generation of girls to the Congress party, Bina immersed herself in relief work. She was arrested in 1942 and remained in jail until 1945.

After her release in 1945 the South Calcutta branch of Congress claimed her attention. Her main task was to organize groups of women who would involve themselves in slum improvement, education and work among women laborers. Responding to Gandhi's call in November of 1946, she took charge of a relief camp in Noakhali.[29]

The inspiration for service to the country came early in Bina Das' life. She did not see any inconsistency in serving her country, first as a revolutionary and then as a Congress Party organizer and relief worker. When she shot at Sir Stanley Jackson she was enraged not only at the British, but at her countrymen as well -- for not fighting back. Having had no former practice shooting a pistol, Bina's chances of success were small, however, it was the act rather than Jackson's death which was important. The act was to rouse people to action because Bina was an Indian girl driven to an unnatural act by the British Raj. Emerging from prison in 1939 Bina was impressed with the mass support for the nationalist cause. This made it possible for her to devote her time to organizing women's groups and participating in social service activities -- tasks more befitting an Indian woman than shooting guns!

Bina Das was fully aware of her society's definition of femininity but she did not let this restrict her activity. Instead, she used this very definition to add a dramatic quality to her symbolic act. The British took the blame and Bina, the actress, remained a Bengali girl of good family and upbringing.

Saroj Nalini Dutt (1887-1925) was the daughter of Brojendra Nath De, a distinguished member of the Indian Civil Service and a member of the Brahmo Samaj. He directed his daughter's education and the youthful Saroj Nalini was introduced to Western literature and social customs. In 1906 she married Guru Saday Dutt, founder of the *Bratachari* movement in Bengal, a sub-divisional officer in Kishergunge. From the early days of their marriage, Saroj Nalini played the role of companion to her husband in all his activities.

Distressed by the misery of the women she encountered in the villages of Bengal, Saroj Nalini decided to form organizations of women to work collectively for their own good.[30] In 1913 she founded the first *Mahila Samiti* in Pabna. The original objectives of these women's organizations were very limited: to develop friendly cooperation among purdah women, interest them in work outside their homes, and arrange lectures on practical subjects.[31] From Pabna she moved to Birbhum (1916), Sultanpur (1917), Rampurhat (1918) and Bankura (1921), beginning a women's institute in each town. Saroj Nalini hoped to persuade

women that their legitimate sphere of work was the world as well as the home. In response to her critics she replied that the housewife's work is called *ghar-sansar*. Since *ghar* means home and *sansar* world, it was clear that in ancient times the work of the woman was in the world and in the home.[32]

On a visit to England in 1921 Saroj Nalini accompanied Sarojini Naidu on a tour of women's organizations. She was impressed by the spirit of social service that permeated every class and by the importance of economic independence to women's emancipation. Following her return to India, Saroj Nalini encouraged the women's institutes to place more emphasis on teaching women skills so that they might earn their own income if widowed or supplement income if married.[33]

Continuing to insist that "there can be no real improvement in the country unless we can educate, and widen the ideas of, women in *muffusil* towns and villages," Saroj Nalini was very successful in organizing *Mahila Samitis* in rural Bengal. This is somewhat surprising if one considers the strikes Saroj Nalini had against her in traditional society: she was a Brahmo, she had never observed purdah, she rode horseback and played tennis with her husband, her household included a Muslim cook and she had travelled to England. According to her husband,

> The secret of Saroj Nalini's hold over the confidence of her Indian sisters and her influence over them lay in her own fondness for the Hindu woman's innate simplicity and modesty of manner and her deep and loving respect for the old customs of the country. . . .[34]

Following Saroj Nalini's premature death in 1925, Guru Saday and a number of friends founded the "Saroj Nalini Memorial Association," to guide and coordinate the activities of the different *Mahila Samitis*. The aims of the association remained those of Mrs. Dutt: attempts were made to secure the social and economic independence of women, to impart formal and vocational training, and to inspire women to form their own democratic associations and through these work for their own improvement.[35] Saroj Nalini perceived it as more important to work for social reforms and education than to agitate for voting righrs. Men's interest in politics had diverted their attention from social reform. Women must remain concerned with the social conditions of women, otherwise, half of the nation would remain paralyzed.

Neither Saroj Nalini nor her followers have made any attempt to politicize the village women who joined the women's institutes. Nor have there been efforts made to train women for what are considered "male jobs." The institutes are based on the idea that women's position will be uplifted only if there is an improvement in their social and economic position. The improvement will come as a result of women's efforts; women must selflessly give of their time to educate and elevate their sisters. In this scheme women are elevated to a key position, consistent with their traditional sex-role, in the future development of the country and at the same time are given the responsibility for removing those disabilities which might prevent them from assuming this role.

Saroj Nalini was the first rural social worker in Bengal. Her concern with women and her dauntless efforts to organize *Mahila Samitis*, effected the lives of many women. Her own life-style varied considerably from that prescribed for an Indian women, particularily a rural woman, but her sincere belief that the woman's legitimate activity was in the world as well as the home and her deep respect for virtues of Indian women protected her from social disapproval.

Shudha Mazumdar (b. 1899) is the daughter of the late Tara Pada Ghosh, a wealthy *zamindar* of Kidderpore. She grew up in a home that was both highly traditional and highly Westernized at the same time. While her mother rigorously observed all religious restrictions on diet and behavior and consulted pandits and astrologers frequently, her father took pride in being mistaken for a Frenchman, always wore European clothes and ate, often in lonely splendor, in a dining room where he was served European food. Shudha was educated in Bengali by her uncles (who lived in the large family mansion), in the household arts by her mother and the servants, and in English by her father and the sisters of St. Teresa's Convent. Before Shudha reached her twelfth birthday, the women of the household began to look seriously for a bridegroom. In 1912 she was married to Satish Chandra Mazumdar, a young man who was soon to pass his I.C.S. examination.

Travelling with her husband from station to station, Shudha was free of the censure of an orthodox joint family. But she was also lonely without her family and became interested in the *Mahila Samitis* then being organized by Saroj Nalini Dutt. She joined the organization and when her husband received his next postings she went on to found *Mahila Samitis* in Manikgunge, Ranaghat, and Basirhat. It was only after Satish Chandra was posted to Alipore that Shudha was able to join branches of the all-India women's organizations. In the 1930's she joined the All India Women's Conference, the National Council of Women in India, and a number of provincial "social service" associations. She played an active role, serving on executive committees, attending yearly conferences, and heading sections assigned to particular social problems.

Shudha Mazumdar has analyzed her involvement in social service organizations as the result of many factors. Her emancipation from the joint family during the early years of marriage caused her to search for new patterns of interaction. Her husband, a remarkable man who encouraged her to learn more about the world and take part in activities outside the home, was a very important influence. In addition, her devotion to religion caused her to interpret her "social work" as service to God.

As a young wife in the villages of East Bengal she went uncriticized despite her efforts to collect money for hospital improvements, her excursions to other villages to talk about educational facilities or her movements to encourage women to join the *Mahila Samiti*. If she met censure, it was slight and came from older women who thought her too "religious-minded" for a young girl and encouraged her to have more children.[36] While Shudha saw her work as a religious duty, she also saw it as a patriotic duty. As her knowledge of the world expanded so did her love of India. She became fiercely patriotic, but as the wife of an I.C.S. Officer was unable to openly express her admiration for the brave young revolutionaries nor join those who advertised their non-cooperation by the *khadi* clothes they wore.

Shudha Mazumdar's conception of "social service" is an interesting one. While she had worked and continues to work hard to ameliorate the conditions of women in prisons, villages and urban slums, she has consistently promoted the concept of "moral education." Based on the idea that true reform of a woman in prison, in a rescue home or any other unfortunate circumstances will come only if "she is brought into contact with thoughts that are considered good and true through the lives of those who are traditionally revered and loved."[37] Shudha Mazumdar has worked to gain acceptance of the idea that women in prisons and rescue homes should be given moral instruction on a regular basis. To accomplish this she has personally arranged for the reading of the ancient epics in these institutions, hoping to give these women examples of ideal womanhood to emulate.

In supporting any type of education for the women of jails and rescue homes, Shudha Mazumdar offended traditional prejudice on a number of counts. Women's education may not have been suspect in the twentieth century, but the idea that prostitutes and criminals deserved education and specifically an education that acquainted them with the revered women of the Hindu epics, was highly unusual. But to her these women were not beyond help, and they deserved the chance to learn about their traditions. Even though her work has been highly unusual, Shudha Mazumdar has received only praise from her society. She is regarded, despite her long involvement in public life, her trip to Europe as a delegate to the I.L.O. and her outspoken remarks on the subject of women, as personifying the moral ideas which she supports.

Renu Chakraborty, because of her affiliation with the Communist party, holds views on the woman question which are not shared by the women just mentioned. Her family includes a number of illustrious individuals: Prakash Chandra Roy, her grandfather and a leading member of the *Nababidhan Samaj* in Patna, her grandmother who was one of the earliest social reformers in Patna; and Dr. B. C. Roy, her uncle and former Chief Minister of Bengal. Renu studied at the London School of Economics in the mid-1930's and was impressed by the Socialist Party at the time of the Spanish Civil War. Returning to India in 1939, she immediately began to work for a change in woman's status.

Renu Chakraborty's deep concern with women's problems began in childhood. She believed that all middle-class women who were fortunate enough to receive an education had a duty to uplift their sisters. The AIWC was at that time the largest and most prominent women's organization. Renu joined and, with the help of some radical young women, attempted to make the AIWC a mass movement. At the Standing Committee Meetings of the AIWC in June of 1942, the showdown came over membership dues. Renu and her companions tried to secure a reduction in annual dues from Rs3 to 4annas, a fee that would have opened the organization to the masses.[38] The resolution was rejected and Renu left the organization, convinced that it would remain elitist, apolitical, charitable and largely ineffectual. Through trying to help women they did not include in their organization and did not understand, the AIWC would always be paternalistic. According to Renu Chakraborty, they had failed to mobilize women to fight the "exploitation of vested interests and feudalism." By making small efforts to improve the lives of women in mines and factories, they may have made some positive gains but in the long run these would not change the status of women.

Renu Chakraborty feels that it is the Communist Party of India and its affiliated women's organizations which are on the right track in regard to women's problems. The problems of society are the result of feudalism, imperialism and capitalism. These pose a double problem for women who are oppressed in society as a result of these larger historical forces and oppressed on a day-to-day level as they try to cope with the problems of running a household and raising children.

Women's quarrel is not with men because in India men took the lead in movements for women's rights. Renu traces the roots of the women's movement to the nineteenth century rationalists. Beginning with Rammohun Roy, she included Vidyasagar and Ranade in her list of individuals who fought for women's social rights. However, it was only after women themselves demonstrated their willingness to take part in the fight for India' freedom that some of those social rights were granted. Complete women's rights -- economic, social and political -- would come only after feudalism had disappeared.

The key to change in women's position is women's involvement. Paternalistic social reforms will not help nor will organizations that bring women together to protest legal disabilities. Women will become involved, Renu insists, if there are economic issues at stake. Rent, food prices, labour rates, and land reorganization are issues that have a direct bearing on the lives of women who must purchase and prepare food for their families. If they are involved in organizing to oppose economic conditions they will make an impression on government and ultimately bring about changes in their own lives. Her ideal organization was the *Mahila Atmaraksha Samiti* which, in 1943, organized a gigantic procession of starving women. Renu insists that this had a tremendous effect on the government and was responsible for the Chief Minister's decision to distribute rice. More of this kind of agitation by women is needed, for it is only then that government will react.[39]

Yet with all Renu's ideas for agitation there is no attempt to encourage women to revolt against their "nature." Activities such as meetings for women and processions are planned to coincide with the free time of women who are homemakers and mothers. The emphasis is on women working side by side with men in the party. Their concerns are the same yet there are some additional social problems that concern women. We find here no argument for absolute equality and no expectation that the destruction of capitalism will immediately result in freedom for women. And the woman who works hard to organize women and articulates Communist ideology is not regarded by her contemporaries as unfeminine, in Bengal Renu Chakraborty is known affectionally as "Renudi" or elder sister.

The assumption has been made by many Western authors that the involvement of Indian women in public life somehow violates the traditional society's definition of the female role. Gail Omvedt has termed this "culture revolt" and suggested that Gandhi's genius lay not in his appeal to traditional religious values, but in his recognition of the "basic forces that were shaking Indian society, from peasant upsurges to anti-caste revolts and the emerging women's movement."[40] Maurice Duverger, commenting on women in politics, wrote, "Women's participation in political life runs counter to an anti-feminist tradition. . . . It represents an attempt to replace an ideo-social system,

under which women's activities were essentially private and family type, by a new system, providing for the complete equality of both sexes in all fields."[41] On the basis of the above examples, I would argue that involvement in public life did not constitute a revolt against the traditional role assigned to women, but was in fact legitimized by newly defined "traditional" values.

Redefinition of the role of women and the ideals of womanhood had begun in the nineteenth century. The reformers sought to alleviate conditions for women by changing laws and supporting education. They justified such change on the basis of religious texts, arguing that the "true Hindu woman" of the past was unfettered by purdah and ignorance and had played an important role in the affairs of the country. At the same time they encouraged women to join the new organizations for educating women. In the second half of the nineteenth century there was a tendency for writers supporting reform to also point out the superiority of Hinduism in its treatment of women. The woman's role as wife and mother and homemaker were seen as natural and inviolate. The fact that Hindu society took great pains to find every girl a husband, to encourage motherhood and to provide a basic education in household arts was to its credit.[42] Here was a reaffirmation of woman's position as related to her biological function. This was not to be challenged -- the question of change centered on her right to participate in public activities. Society was blamed for suppressing women but it was also pointed out that the "dark ages" for women occurred under Muslim and British rule. The Revivalists were extremely important in gaining the acceptance of society for what reformers had advocated and articulated for each other. Intellectual arguments had less impact than the acceptance of women as gurus and disciples. In an atmosphere charged with patriotic sentiments women were prepared to serve their country and society was ready to accept their service.[43]

The activities which women engaged in were varied -- while some women joined revolutionary societies, others toured the countryside introducing the *charkha*, led boycotts and worked with organizations to improve the social and economic condition of women. Sarojini Naidu, believing that women's problems could be solved only if the country were free, devoted her efforts to the Congress Party and the para-political All India Womens Conference. Basanti Devi's involvement closely followed that of her husband and did not continue after his death. Bina Das attempted to shoot Governor Jackson so that Indians might be aroused to fight the oppressor, when she felt that many people had become involved in the movement, she turned to social service. Saroj Nalini Dutt emphasized the importance of *mufussil* women to the progress of the country -- unless their lives were changed there could be no advancement for India. Shudha Mazumdar practised religion through "good deeds" and stressed the importance of bringing poor and destitute women in contact with the ideal Hindu women of the epics. Renu Chakraborty's complete faith in politics, as a way of making needs felt and ultimately as the source from which change will come, still allowed her to see a role for women's organizations in achieving a change in women's status. These women defined themselves as feminine and their activities as in the best tradition of Indian womanhood and in doing so made a significant contribution to the redefinition of woman's role.

Life for women had changed dramatically in less than a century; it had become possible for women to take an active role in public activities without violating "traditional values." These women were departing from the life-styles of their mothers and grandmothers but they were operating under a new definition of femininity. Panchanan Bhattacharya wrote a book called the *Ideals of Indian Womanhood*, published in 1921, which illustrates this point. The book is a collection of short biographies -- each woman represents a virtue. The women chosen for the Ancient and Medieval period represent the virtues of purity, self-consecration, benevolence, constancy, self-abnegation, fidelity, righteousness, renunciation, philanthropy, self-respect, duty and honor. However, the virtues of the Modern period are quite different and include patriotism, love of country, religious devotion, sacrifice, the ideal queen, saintliness, public spirit and service to fellowmen.[44]

The Revivalist concept of women had been successfully merged with the reformer's desire to see women play a role in activities outside her own home. Public acceptance of the activities of these women meant that they never became involved in a cultural revolt as did a number of British and American feminists. They continued to personify the ideals of Indian womanhood -- compassion, sacrifice and saintliness -- and those women who inspired the greatest following were, like Sarojini Naidu and Basanti Devi, "true Indian women" and not revolutionaries!

FOOTNOTES

1. Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay, "The Status of Women in India," *Women in Modern India: Fifteen Papers by Indian Women*, ed. E. C. Gedge and M. Choksi, (Bombay, 1929), p. 4.

2. Sheila Rowbotham, "Colony Within Colony," *Women, Resistance and Revolution*, (New York, 1972), and Robert Jay Lifton, "Woman As Knower: Some Psychohistorical Perspectives," *The Woman in America*, ed. R. J. Lifton, (Boston, 1967).

3. Manmohan Kaur, *Role of Women in the Freedom Movement (1857-1947)*, (Delhi, 1968), p. 32; Jogesh Chandra Bagal, *Women's Education in Eastern India: The First Phase*, (Calcutta, 1956).

4. Usha Chakraborty, *Condition of Bengali Women Around the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century*, (Calcutta, 1963), pp. 42-53. Chakraborty gives the following percentages for girls attending school from among the female population of school age: 1881 - 0.86%; 1891 - 1.6%; 1901 - 1.8%; 1910 - 4.32%.

5. Prabhat Chandra Gangopadhyay, *Bangalar Nari Jagaran*, (Kalikata, 1352 B.S.), p. 15.

6. Swami Madhavananda and Ramesh Chandra Majumdar, ed. *Great Women of India: The Holy Mother Birth Centenary Memorial*, (Mayavarti, Almora, Himalayas, 1953), p. 469.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 538.

8. Pravrajika Atmaprana, "Swami Vivekananda on the Ideal of Indian Womanhood," *Bulletin of the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture*, Swami Vivekananda Centenary Memorial Volume, 1863-1963, XIV, (March, 1963), p. 22.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 125; Swami Vivekananda, *Our Women*, (Calcutta, 1970), pp. 24, 39.

10. These particular women were selected because they represent a wide range of activities. From the data I have on other Bengali women I would suggest that these six types would serve as categories of activity. The women have been referred to by their maiden names in some cases and their married names in others. Generally it depended on the name by which were known during the Independence Movement.

11. I would agree with George Dangerfield, *The Strange Death of Liberal England*, (New York, 1961) that the term "suffragist" better suits the pre-1910 movement in England to gain the vote for women, p. 153.

12. Chandrakala A. Hate, *Hindu Woman and Her Future*, (Bombay, 1948), p. 215.

13. *Eighteenth and Nineteenth Annual Report, 1934-1936, Women's Indian Association*, (Madras, 1936), p. 2.

14. J. C. Bagal, *Jatio Andolane Banganari*, (Kalikata, 1954), p. 18.

15. Kaur, p. 170.

16. Hate, p. 217.

17. Kaur, p. 176.

18. Eleanor Morton, *The Women in Gandhi's Life*, (New York, 195?), p. 18.

19. "Sarojini Naidu," *Roshi: Monthly Journal of the All-India Womens Conference*, IX, 1957, p. 14.

20. This seems to be in direct contrast with the fate of American and British females who were active in women's movements. For example, Robert E. Riegel in *American Feminists* (Lawrence, Kansas, 1963) stresses the connection between the feminist ideas and the idea that marriage and domestic work were slavery. (p. 17). Helen Vendlers, in her review of *Notable American Women, 1607-1950*, wrote, "The stories prove that women can do practically anything; and they prove that so far, they tend to be pushed to do it only by some awful adversity, or, on the other hand, by spinsterhood." (*New York Times Book Review*, Sept. 17, 1972, Section 7). Commenting on the "suffragette" movement in England, George Dangerfield emphasized that "its unconscious motive was the rejection of a moribund, a respectable a smothering security." (*The Strange Death of Liberal England*, p. 144).

21. *Roshi*, p. 5.

22. Hemandranath Das Gupta, *Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das*, (New Delhi, 1969), p. 68.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 69.

24. Dilip Kumar Chatterjee, *C. R. Das and the Indian National Movement*, (Calcutta, 1965), p. 197.

25. Krishna Bose, "Important Women in Netaji's Life," *Illustrated Weekly of India*, (August 13, 1972), p. 35.

26. Bina Das, *Shrinkal Jhankar*, (Kalikatta, 1947), p. 7.

27. Kalyani Bhattacharya, Unpublished ms. from author.

28. Bina Das' Confession, Ms. from author. Underlining not in the original.

29. Das, *Shrinkal Jhankar*, pp. 144-154.

30. "History and Background of the Association," *Saroj Nalini Memorial Association for Women's Welfare Work*, Annual Report, 1970-1971, p. 3.

31. G. S. Dutt, *A Woman of India: Being the Life of Saroj Nalini (Founder of the Women's Institute Movement in India)*, 2nd. ed (London, 1929), pp. 88-96.

32. *Ibid.*, pp. 98-99.

33. Interview with Mrs. Aroti Dutt, August 15, 1972.

34. Dutt, p. 81.

35. *Saroj Nalini Memorial Association*, pp. 3-4.

36. Shudha Mazumdar, *A Pattern of Life in India*, unpublished ms., p. 187.

37. Shudha Mazumdar, *Women in Prison: At Home and Abroad*, (Calcutta, 1957), p. 28.

38. *Association of the All-India Women's Conference, Minutes of the Half-Yearly Meeting of the Standing Committee*, June 1942, Item no. 37.

39. Benu Chakraborty, "New Perspectives for Women's Movement -- After 25 Years of Drift," *Link*, August 15, 1972, pp. 177-181; Interview with Renu Chakraborty, August 16, 1972.

40. Gail Omvedt, "Caste, Class and Women's Liberation," paper read at AAS meetings, Chicago, March, 1973, p. 13.

41. Maurice Duverger, *The Political Role of Women*, (Paris, 1965), p. 9.

42. Pradip Sinha, *Nineteenth Century Bengal: Aspects of Social History*, Calcutta, 1965), pp. 104-106.

43. Karen Leonard, in her paper "Educated Women at Work: Supportive Factors in Indian Society," (read at AAS meetings, Chicago, March, 1973) mentions the argument that in India class status supersedes female status as of some value. In terms of my data, this theory finds little support. Both middle and upper class women and peasant women found it necessary to fulfill the requirements for "Ideal Indian Womanhood" to secure a following and to escape criticism from their society. For examples see the biographical sketches in Kamala Das Gupta, *Swadhinata Sangrame Banglar Nari*, (Calcutta, 1370 B.S.), and the newly published *Dictionary of National Biography*, (Calcutta, 1973).

44. Panchanan Bhattacharyya, *Ideals of Indian Womanhood*, (Calcutta, 1921).

VI. THE VALUE OF WOMEN

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Recent demographic information from Bangladesh shows a population of very young median age (16.3), with a high birth rate (45-57 per 1000 in a three year period), and a moderate death rate (15-17) (Mosley 1970:1). At the current high rate of growth, the population can be expected to double in a little over 20 years. In the absence of any intervening factors, the growth rate would in fact accelerate (Mosley 1970:8). At present, rural Bangladesh has what might be considered urban population densities of 2,000 per square mile. Superficially, it might be expected that optimum densities for survival have already been met or surpassed. Yet among Bengali villagers, there is little sentiment for restricting population increase, and no talk of population pressure on limited land resources, a condition similarly noted by Marshall for Uttar Pradesh (Marshall 1971:5). Nevertheless, human groups do make attempts to control their populations. But as Mary Douglas suggests "They are more often inspired by concern for scarce social resources, for objects giving status and prestige, than by concern for dwindling basic resources" (Douglas 1966:268). That is, it is usually prestige rather than subsistence which is at stake (Ibid:269). It is not the fear of famine which will put a break on population size -- many Bengalis recall the ardours of food shortages in 1943 -- but a concern for access to certain social advantages.

Upperclass Muslims at Shaitnal,[1] a predominatly Muslim community in Matlab Thana, Comilla District, have always followed certain strategies which spontaneously limit their family size, since their concern was to prevent the fragmentation of landed estates on which their prestige was based. Thus, they avoided taking in outside women by resorting to cross-cousin and parallel-cousin marriages, and permitted a later marriage age amongst their women, with its implications of less emphasis on the production of offspring. Although suicide by Hindu widows no longer occurs in Bengal, uppercaste Hindu widows are not permitted to remarry, a cultural limitation which works to prevent ritual purity becoming a widely endowed social advantage. In both Hindu and Muslim communities at Shaitnal, there is also a conviction that chastity merits social reward.

For those in the population with little prestige to protect, the emphasis is on the production of numbers. Although some land reform has occurred since 1947, the situation is somewhat confused, and families claim ownership of the land they cultivate while the Land Settlement Office investigates title (Raper 1970:7). Title to disputed land -- such as *char* (land created by a change in the course of the river) is claimed through use, and protected by force. At

Shaitnal, there are still the occasional *lathi* battles, as those who plant a crop try to prevent others from harvesting it. Some landless families also depend on income generated by the labour of the men, who both sell their energies locally and travel annually to harvest crops outside the district. Some poor women also find employment as servants for upperclass families, and as agricultural labourers. So, for a large part of the rural population, the production of personnel makes sense.

The demographic information from Bangladesh has other provocative aspects. The sex ratio of the rural population indicates slightly more males in all age groups in the sample, except for the age groups 20-34, a reversal which can be accounted for by the migration of young men to urban areas in search of work (Mosley 1970:4). The Bengali population as a whole then, reflects a preponderance of males. Moreover, the mortality rates by age and sex are particularly interesting.

The mortality rate for females under 5 years of age is 35-50% higher than that for males, the figures representing two consecutive years of the survey (Mosley 1970:5). Mosley comments that "this mortality differential is apparently due to the fact that parents are more cautious about the health of their sons." (Mosley 1970:5).

Ethnographic data collected at Shaitnal between 1963-65, an area adjacent to that of the demographic survey, confirms Mosley's supposition about the concern of parents for the survival of male children. The remainder of this paper will consider some of this data. In doing so, I will discuss the two kinds of value placed on women: firstly, their importance as items of luxury and symbols of respect (that is, their value as consumption goods) and secondly, their productive value as workers and reproductive agents (their value as capital goods). It is suggested that the three phases of relatively high female mortality (see Table 3 of Mosley's paper) equate with the three periods in the life cycle when their consumption value is low; in infancy between ages 1 to 5, during the early years of reproduction, and again from the age of about 59 on, after a period of widowhood. At all three periods, females die at a rate greater than that for males in the same age categories, and it is suggested that the explanation for this differential survival lies in the intermittent value placed on women as capital goods and as consumption goods. However, despite the apparent wasteage of female reproductive potential in two of the three age categories, it appears that this neglect has little to do with population control. The final portion of the paper considers some recent changes in marriage transactions which appear to be related to shifts in the prestige system, and to a concommittant revaluation of women, which might ultimately result in a decrease in the fertility rate.

Rural Bengalis are greatly concerned with social advantage. There are many indices of ranking evident im homestead titles, occupational categories, and in the linguistic nuances of honorific or familiar forms of address. Women appear to be the group on which to focus in order to understand the prestige structure, since women are used as symbols of status and prestige, and the giving of a daughter in marriage may be seen as "the crucial ranked transaction" (Khare 1972:621).

The first observation about Bengali attitudes towards women may be taken from the wry comments of the women themselves. "Girls are poison," the women say. Their constant demands for soaps and oils and saris culminate in the economic extravaganza of marriage. To acquire this female paraphernalia, the women must depend on men (their fathers, brothers or husbands) since men control access to wealth and public life, thereby being able to monitor the women's purchases. A number of dichotomies, both symbolic and real support this marked distinction between the sexes. Men are assoicated with the right, preferred side of things, women with the left; in many situations such as in inheritance, or as legal witnesses, one man is equivalent to two women. The symbolic shorthand of these right/left, two/one categorisations, sets apart and reinforces the roles of men and women in a hierarchical way. It is a cultural code for the political and social realities of village life (Lindenbaum 1968a). Women are the symbolic pawns in male competition for prestige.

The system must operate with a shortage, otherwise the market would be flooded with luxuries, and the symbols would turn into commodities with a low marginal utility value, becoming useless for social gain.[2] Although Al-Hadis (the commentaries on the life of the Prophet) notes that mankind has been warned not to prefer sons to daughters, at the risk of losing Paradise (Book 1:159), male children in Bengal are indeed considered more desirable.[3]

When a child of either sex falls ill, parents consult a variety of survival services. At Shaitnal, these include medical attention from local Homeopathic practitioners, some practitioners who dispense Allopathic medicine, and a Hindu with Ayurvedic training. Some mothers visit local fairs (*mellas*) to seek the blessing and medicinal protection of Fakirs, and most women consult elderly neighbours (*murrubis*) who specialised in home cures (Lindenbaum 1968). Some families are also able to consult American physicians at the Cholera Research Laboratory in Dacca.

It is apparent that ailing male children were given most attention. One family with whom I was in almost daily contact during the period of fieldwork shows concern when any of the 4 daughters became ill, but only the 5 year old male child's health merits consultation with every practitioner in the above list. In this particular middle class family, the mother did not visit a country fair to consult with a Fakir; instead, a holy man resided with the family for several weeks, directing most of his activity toward the apparent barrenness of the married son's wife, and the fevers and rages manifested by the young male child. This small boy, the only male child of the second wife, is the only family member whose name and date of birth are carved into the house rafters, and during one evening when he appeared to have an unusually high fever, his father read the Koran aloud throughout the night, promising to distribute food to the poor if the child recovered.

Some medical care is considered too risky for male children. Allopathic medicines, accepted for small girls, will be with-held from their male siblings if the effect is considered to have been too dramatic. For similar reasons, small boys are hidden from government smallpox vaccinators, their parents not wishing to risk a fever which might be the fore-runner to more serious illness.

The male child is also favoured when it comes to food. The approved household eating order is for the father and other family males to be given food first, then the daughters, and finally the daughter-in-law with the mother. In addition, the son receives more choice foods than do his sisters. In the family already described, the small son eats eggs when they were scarce, and when other luxuries are shared (such as fruit or biscuits from Dacca) the mother favours him with her portion. Several 5 year old male children at Shaitnal are also still breastfed on demand, though it is difficult to say if this was because they are last children, or the last child who happens to be male.

The importance of the mother's relationship with the male child is apparent in conversations between them. On several occasions, 5 or 6 year old male children would bent momentary anger against their mothers by saying: "When I grow up, I won't feed you or give you money." Since there is a 10-15 year age difference in the age at marriage of husbands and wives, women are aware of the prospect of early widowhood. Sixty-seven percent of women over 50 are already widows, and Mosley rightly comments thatthis prospect probably provides a strong motivation for young girls to have large families, since they are all aware of the high rate of infant mortalities (1970:8). It would also be interesting to know how many last children are male, since it it this child in particular who the mother might hope to influence when she needs him.

It would seem, looking at Mosley's figures on death rates by age and sex, that the investment of attention in the young male child gives the mother about 10 years of protection in widowhood. Between ages 50-59, slightly more males die per thousand than females (19 to 18), but between 60-69, the situation is reversed and females begin to die at a rate greater than that for males, a trend which accelerates as age rises. Assuming that a mother has a son in the latter years of her childbearing period, say at around 35 (of a 15-39 year span), this child would marry between 21-25 years, when the mother is 56-60, and likely to be already widowed. This male may therefore be his mother's main source of security for the next few years. His own wife, about 15 years of age at this time, will in the next 10 years give birth to several children of her own.[4] Thus, the new wife's status will be rising, and her competing demands for the attention of the same male will be more imperative. This male is indeed the pivot of competition between the two women, and the nature of the relationship between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law is poignantly recognised in Bengali proverbs and literature.

At marriage, the two kinds of value (as consumption and capital goods) placed on women are experienced in rapid succession. As she appraoches marriage age, a young woman's value as a productive asset is de-emphasized. Through mounting cultural empahses, which have little to do with biological need, she is progressively turned into a symbol of luxury. Her public visibility is made scarce, while the economic burdens of keeping her in feminine attire increase. The greater the capacity of her family to distance her from any suggestion of productive activity, the greater her value as a symbol of luxury. Young marriageable girls are often prompted to exhibit their needlework -- embroidered pillow cases with poetic messages -- suggesting the development of these refined skills in idle hours. The rewards of this "image management" (Khare 1972:625) accrue to her family in the social elevation of a prestigious affinal alliance.

The young bride, newly severed from a household where she has been treated as a most precious object, makes a sometimes bumpy transition to the house of her husband, where she becomes a servant to the older generation, works hard and speaks little. Her productive value as a worker in her husband's family is high, but her value as a luxury good is now low. Since the present marriage ideal for most girls is hypergamic,[5] that is, women are transferred up the social scale, the daughter-in-law's respectful behaviour must reflect this structural condition. She is also constrained by the fact that she is entering a new family at the bottom of its social ladder, a fact recognised in the feeding order, and by her general occupation as a worker and servant for family members.

The cultural transition for the bride is thus abrupt, a stress sometimes resulting in manifestations of autistic behaviour.[6] From a luxury object, she is now abruptly redefined as a capital asset, and her gradual regaining of status depends on the ability to give birth to sons, and the consequent accumulation of the symbolic values surrounding motherhood. Her failure in this role is sufficient reason for the husband to take a second wife, a prospect which propels her into consultation with ritual specialists who it is hoped will rapidly ensure pregnancy.

This view of the dynamics of family relationships through time is focused on the relative disappearance of females from the population pyramid at several distinct locations; the first between ages 1 and 5 when a cultural bias appears to favour better nutrition and medical attention for male children. The second occurs during early childbearing years, when there is heightened pressure for women to give birth to sons, but as yet little cultural protection for the new mother. High maternal mortality figures are only part of the evidence of physical insult during this phase. Many Bengali women who have given birth to at least one child suffer from a condition they call "*shutika*" -- a deficiency disorder as yet only sketchily reported in the medical literature, which is manifested by symptoms of diarrhoea, headache, dizziness and weakness. The hazards of childbirth then, would appear to involve more than obstetric difficulties in unhygienic environments. They also include repeated pregnancies and a poor diet, resulting in malnourished young women ill-equipped to survive a complicated pregnancy. The third period of high mortality for women occurs after about 10 years of widowhood, when cultural protection now favours the emergent daughter-in-law. Widows in this age group again express the realities of their situation. They report that they too hide from smallpox vaccinators, but their view of the future is different from the future they see for small boys. "Why should I take medicine," they say. "At my age, I am in God's hands," a fatalism which expresses their diminished social worth.

Hindu society more dramatically illustrates the social decline of women at widowhood. While her husband is alive, a woman scolds her daughter-in-law for a lack of respectful behaviour, saying "I am not yet a widow that you can treat me in this fashion." At widowhood, she divests herself of all symbols of her value as a consumption good; she removes her jewelry, may no longer wear a coloured sari or the red forehead mark of the married woman. Although she continues to work at domestic chores, and her contribution in productive labour

may be significant, she has lost her important prestige value, and now becomes almost a non-consumer, committed to life-long austerities, frequently fasting and eating the least prestigious and least nutritious foods.

The social rewards placed on the seclusion of women and the dissociation between prestige and any appearance of productive activity presupposes that women teachers or nurses, who defy such cultural codes will be seen as prostitutes. The message inherent in the symbols of femininity was painfully apparent during the war in Bangladesh in 1971. Some of the girls raped by the Pakistan army were reported to have committed suicide by strangling themselves with their saris and long hair -- symbols of their former purity and social worth. The young women subsequently kept as prostitutes in army camps, on the other hand, were dressed in men's shorts and had their hair cut, to prevent further self-destruction, it was said. The symbolism of that outward defacement was in fact a statement of the values of the social system. In the absence of external aid, the prognosis for survival of these socially devalued women would seem uncertain. As prestige objects, females have cultural protection; at other times, they are socially wasted.

The disappearance of females from the population pyramid between 1 and 5 and during the early years of reproduction, would seem then to be little related to the elimination of reproductive potential. Rather, it might be interpreted as a stratification phenomenon, an asertion of male dominance, present in Medina prior to the arrival of Islam, since the Prophet is said to have spoken against infanticide. Moreover, the population growth of Bangladesh is about 3% a year, a growth rate presently exceeded by only two other countries, the Philippines and Thailand (Stoekel:1973:22). Reproductive potential appears to be a particularly labile reserve which can be culturally tapped or blocked. With a fertility rate of over 6 live births per woman (Mosley 1970:7), the prestige battle amongst men is still dependent on the production of numbers.

PART 2

I have so far been discussing a social system in which the rewards are focused around culturally created scarcities. The ground rules for marriage are in effect a set of agreed upon standards for exchanging symbols, in which "the parties try to assure that the value gained it greater than the value lost" (Khare, quoting Barth 1972:625). Beautiful, fair, chaste women were accepted by families of equal or higher status in exchange for the prestige of social rank. The exchange system is relatively well modulated, and gross leaps in social elevation were rare. It is a system based on the scarcity of appropriate women, a scarcity both biologically contrived and cultural defined. Apart from numerical manipulation, many flaws can eliminate a girl from the most desirable category -- small physical defects,[7] the social implications of the marriage of her sister.

In the last few decades, however, marriage transactions at Shaitnal have undergone change. Until recently, the groom's family was the principal donor. Now he and his family receive more than they give. That is, there has been an overall change from bride price to dowry.[8] That the shift is recent was

evident from the confusion surrounding the matter in Dacca newspapers in 1964, where marriage payments were denounced as a foreign element (by which was meant Hindu-like). A number of letters to the editor attempted to determine whether the debate was about dower (Islamic) or dowry (un-Islamic). The change seems to have begun in this century, since the sociologist A. K. Nazmul Karim reports that his father (who I estimate to have married around the year 1900) observed the traditional Muslim custom by which the husband's family, not the bride's, paid for the marriage expenses and offered jewelry and other presents (Karim 1963:311). Moreover, at Shaitnal in 1964, a 25 year old Muslim could list in some detail the defunct payments formerly required of the groom's family, and those now required of the bride's.

The change has several interesting implications. Firstly, it indicates a shift in the prestige system, away from one based on land, access to which was minutely regulated through the careful deployment of women. Now, more rapid rises (and falls) can be made through the accumulation of money, giving rise to a class which can translate commercial success into social position. At Shaitnal, some of the old upperclass landowning families have succeeded in making the transition, by educating this generation of sons to enter into commercial activities in Dacca, or to become teachers and government employees. Some have not, and are in danger of social eclipse by their lack of access to monetary income.

The second feature of the new system indicates that the shortage now surrounds properly qualified men, not women, a condition not as amenable to local influence. Income-earning positions in government or industry are still scarce. The dowry payments are therefore now added to the bride as an inducement to the family of a qualified groom to make an alliance. In some cases, the girl's family, in addition to gifts such as a wristwatch, transistor radio or bicycle, will undertake to educate the groom, supporting him through Dacca University, in expectation of a return from his future earnings.

It might be predicted that the change from bride price to dowry is an index of other major cultural shifts. Bride price might be seen as an expression of interest in the future child-bearing capacity of the girl, since in societies where it occurs, it is frequently refunded if the wife is divorced without issue, lesser portions being returned according to the number of children born (Beidelman:1972:69). A dowry payment suggests that while the girl's family acquires a rise in prestige, her contribution to the groom's family is now a sound economic connection, while her reproductive role is relatively de-emphasized.

In the press to become properly qualified to support himself and his kinsmen from his own earnings, the groom might be expected to marry at a later age. Similarly, the need for a girl's family to acquire significant capital to marry her might result in a rise in age at marriage of girls. These rises may already be occurring (Lincoln Chen, personal communication), but since the present median age at marriage for girls is only 15, the trend would need to continue before it registers a significant effect on the fertility rate. Such culturally based population trends should occur, however, independent of any government attempts to introduce birth control, since the theme of the present

analysis suggests that fundamental social concerns center around competition for access to the bases of prestige. In the past, small elites maintained their social position by limiting family size and by other strategies that restrict access of outsiders to the source of prestige, their landed estates. The present prestige structure, which now admits money, is more fluid, and if social rewards were to become increasingly available to larger numbers of people, this would invite processes of self-limitation by a larger section of the population.

FOOTNOTES

1. Fieldwork was carried out between 1963-64 with Robert Glasse, and alone in 1964-65. We were generously supported by grants from the Australian Department of External Affairs, and the Cholera Research Laboratory, Dacca. The ethnographic present in this paper refers to the period 1963-65.

2. I am grateful to my colleague, Dr. Joseph Schachter, for help in sorting out economic concepts.

3. In a Hindu family, only a male heir can perform rites to ensure the parents' salvation.

4. Mosley reports the fertility rate is highest in the age group 20-24.

5. At the top of the social scale, people attempt equal matching.

6. Compare the suicide rate of Chinese brides at a similar moment. See C. K. Yang, *The Chinese Family in the Communist Revolution* (M.I.T. 1965).

7. The reason given by a 25 year old male informant at Shaitnal for refusing an otherwise socially acceptable marriage offer.

8. An observation I hope to document more fully.

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VII. LITERARY FEATURES OF JARIGAN: THE MUSLIM FOLK EPIC OF EAST BENGAL

Mary Frances Dunham

Introduction: The Term and Its Origins

"Jārīgān, bišāder gān" (*Jari* songs are songs of grief) is the opening line of the poet Jasimuddin's anthology of these songs.[1] Such a lyrical definition of the term is well suited to introducing this little studied but impressive class of Bengali bardic song. In reality, however, *jarigan* is a concept which includes much more than "songs of grief." It encompasses a range of themes from heroic to humorous and a range of styles from epic verse to dialogue.

Originally the word *jari* was borrowed from the Persian *zari* which literally means lamentation.[2] The Bengali word *gan*, on the other hand has a wide variety of meanings: song, songs, collection of songs, repertory, singing, a song performance, recital, concert, program. The compound *jarigan*, or simply *jari* with the *gan* understood, refers to the vocal repertory which had its origin in the Muharram festival introduced to Bengal *circa* 1400 A.D.[3] *Jari* songs in the context of this ritual are the Bengali equivalent of Perso-Arabic *marsiya* and other *majlis* chants of the Shia sect.[4] The religio-historic themes are the same wherever this festival is celebrated and many Bengali chants and songs resemble their counterparts elsewhere in the Muslim world. The ritual repertory ranges from flagelation group chants and songs which accompany dance mimes to solo scriptural chants and elegaic songs. Each vocal medium has a particular function and technical name, (*nauha, matam, soz, marsiya,* etc.) but in Bengali the various types were popularly conceived under one expression: *jarigan.*

Bards and bardic dancers were employed to share the burden of the lengthy Muharram programs with the religious leaders. It was natural that these bards (*boyati*) and their chorus (*dohar;* literally, repeaters) should absorb *jari* songs into the recitals which they gave on other occasions during the year. A secular repertory developed of Muslim narrative verse inspired by Muharram themes and poetic forms; this repertory was also known as *jarigan.*

The nineteenth century saw the expansion of Bengali *punthi* (religio-historic) and *kavya* ("ballad") recitals into extensive sessions as a form of mass entertainment. These sessions, extending for days and nights at a stretch were conducted for audiences numbering in the thousands. The sessional repertories ("*-gan*") included more than one team of singers and a variety of performance media: choreographic, theatrical, and instrumental as well as vocal. Programs included debates in verse, dances, popular refrain songs and choral repetitions sung by circulating *dohar.* The purpose was to entertain (*monoronjoner jonno*), and the singers exerted all their literary and musical talents to satisfy a rustic by demanding audience. The fair-like atmosphere of the

programs was enhanced by the happy familarity of popular items combined with the excitement of *ex tempore* competition among performers. *Kavigan* and *jatra* are the better known examples of this development in West Bengal. In Muslim and essentially rural East Bengal the same phenomenon took place. When the bardic recitals of *jarigan* were expanded into a full-fledged session, the title *jarigan* was given to the entire performance.

The term *jarigan*, then, can refer to specific elegies sung at Muharram time, or to a large corpus of bardic literature or to the recitals themselves. The term *jarigan* has become less and less associated with its literal and ritual source and more associated with the characteristics of the secular performance. *Jari*, originally signifying lamentation, has come to be used synomously with *nama;* heroic chronicles, not necessarily tragic, or simply with *gan;* song, in the sense of ballad, not necessarily heroic and possibly humorous.

With the decline in the twentieth century of elaborate performances, *jari* singing also suffered; the number of expert *jari* singers is few and their aging voices, if not their bardic memories, are failing. Examples of *jari* tests have fortunately been preserved in a few anthologies of Bengali folk songs, among which Jasimuddin's collection is the most extensive (Dacca, 1968). Even these limited records bear the stamp of a once vital genre and testify to the refinement of its individual compositions.

Literary Themes

The *jari* repertory is identified conceptually, not always consistently, by its focus on the Hasan-Husein cycle from Shia hagiology. This cycle includes biographic episodes in the lives of the Hasanan leading up to the climactic battle of Karbala (680 A.D.) and the martyrdom of Husein. This religio-historic foundation is directly inherited from Muharram literature and the episodes narrated correlate with those of the *tazia* (passion dramas) of the Middle East.[5] An indefinite number of satellite cycles are associated with this Muharram nucleus. In the *tazia* the themes out of historical sequence are organized as stories within stories in the form of holy messages, prophetic dreams, visions, or the past recalled. In the *jari* transcriptions each song is generally a self-contained episode, a miniature epic or *chanson de geste;* no indication is given of how one song is connected with another.

Sub-cycles can be related to Muharram themes in varying degrees according to their chronological proximity to Karbala events of their geneological ties with the heroes of that battle. For example, the episodes in the life of Imam Ali (father of the Hasanan, martyred in 661 A.D.) form a close satellite cycle. The post-Karbala reunion of the hero Hanifa, a step-uncle of the Hasanan, with Husein's surviving son forms another. On the other hand, *jari* songs about Abraham and the sacrifice of Ishmael (Isaac in Hebrew scriptures) belong to the remote past of Muslim religious history. The exploits of another Hanifa in India who seeks the hand of Hindu princesses are in the nature of local romances and have little or no historical connection with Karbala. Finally

there are topical and social songs, which have nothing to do with Muharram or satellite themes, but which are traditionally included in *jari* sessions in the way contemporary scenes and discussions figured in European miracle plays.

Unfortunately the examples of *jari* songs that have been collected and published do not indicate to what extent there is thematic unity within a particular program or to what extent the conceptual focus of Muharram themes is realized in practice. They do, however, reflect the popularity of certain central themes -- the Kasem-Sokhina episodes, the death of Ashgor Ali, the poisoning of Hasan, the meeting of Joynal and Hanifa, etc., and the popularity of such unrelated themes as the ironic metamorphosis into musical instruments and fine shoes for the wealthy of a butchered cow and the farcical situation of a Nagor (Town) Ali marrying the sister of Shagor (Sea) Ali.

The religio-historic orientation of Karbala themes, however, articulates deeper sub-strata of religio-philosophic themes: salvation through self-sacrifice to the will (*hukum*, *banda*, etc.) of Allah, and the potential within His creatures to achieve that will. The suicidal battle of Karbala is a parable in itself: Husein and his little band of followers have the opportunity to capitulate time after time in an unequal battle, but each hero seeks the struggle that will end his life rather than renounce the will of Allah and allow *Soytan* (Satan) the victory. Wives and mothers, even small children, suffer the hardships of extreme hunger, thirst and bereavement. Yet, thoughout the increasingly heroic struggle, through a crescendo of lamentations, glows the compensatory blessing of Allah. *Jarigan*, are, in this sense, *vijay kavya* (victory ballads).

Although the themes of satellite and extraneous *jari* songs depart from this religio-philosophic emphasis on self-sacrifice, the theme of sacrifice is still present in a more explicit form. For example, the story of Abraham's sacrifice of Ishmael, though remote in time and space from Karbala events, forms an explicit prelude to the theme of self-sacrifice implicit in the Karbala cycle. The ballad themes of the *jari* repertory which are more local, (e.g., Hanifa in India) less heroic in an epic sense, also reflect the theme of self-sacrifice in a humbler yet vital context. Finally, the story of the butchered cow, with all its non-Muslim and humorous overtones, is properly *jari* (i.e., sacrificial), albeit mock-*jari*. Thus there is a thematic continuum which underlies the surface disparity of *jari* themes, binding lofty themes with the humble by one thread: sacrifice.

"*Jārigān bisāder gān . . . Ei Muharramer kāhinī nānā korun dhāray probāhito.*" (*Jarigan* are songs of grief . . . in these songs flow various streams of pathos.)[6] Grief and suffering, the passive forms of heroism, are both physical and mental in the Karbala cycle. The martyrdoms which are commemorated by *jari* literature are emotionally heightened by descriptions of suffering: the anguish of Hasan's wife when she realizes she has poisoned him, the women and children crying for water at Karbala, the taunting of Yezid when he offers the head of Husein to Husein's captive daughter. The events described are more historically immediate, therefore more vital to the Bengali

audience than the tragedies of Troy to a modern Greek audience or the slaughter at Kurukṣetra to modern Indian audiences. The expression ". . . *kāndite lāgilo*" (he/she began to weep) describes the state of the Bengali audience no less than that of a particular protagonist. The emphasis on *koruṇ-rosh* and its relative immediacy in the Karbala cycle is comparable to the concentration of grief and suffering in the Christian Passion literature.

Grief is complemented in the Karbala cycle by heroic exaltation or *bhir-rosh* (heroic feeling).[7] The heroes of Karbala, especially Husein, are like demi-gods as a result of their spiritual victory over mortal death. *Jari* songs are noted for their *manushva* (manliness) as well as their pathos; *shringara* (erotic tenderness) is quite absent in the *jari* repertory, even as the flute and *shenai* are absent from its orchestra. The *manushava* of the *jari* repertory reinvigorated bardic themes, which, under the potent influence of Vaisnava and Sufi literature, had lost the martial backbone of Sanskritic epics. As the narrative themes of *jari* songs become less associated with the central Karbala cycle, so their mood becomes more positive: their *bhir-rosh* supercedes the *karun*, until, as in the cow *jari*, a light-hearted mock-epic mood is reached. As one Ali says to another in the "*Shagor Ali, Nagor Ali*" song: "*Shanga āilo jārīr pālā biday ābār cāi.*" (Come, let us say good-bye to this serious *jari* strain.)[8]

Taken as a whole then, the collections of *jari* songs suggest a potentially coherent repertory, in spite of the superficial heterogeneity of the narrated events. This repertory is distinct from Hindu *punthi* and *kavya* literature not only by virtue of its Muslim religio-historic narrative themes, but also by virtue of a new spiritual orientation, one which emphasizes martial valor as well as pathos and, in contrast to Bengali Hindu literature, the human potential for spiritual if not physical, victories. The sacrifice and suffering depicted in *jari* songs, is the ἀγών of *jari* literature, the personal struggle of man against his earthly fate to achieve his spiritual destiny.

Poetic Style: Prosody and Diction

A. *Prosody*

Both narrative and lyric verse structures exist in the *jari* repertory. The songs in narrative verse are in *payar chanda* (*payar* "meter"), the couplet verse structure traditional to Bengali literary and oral narrative poetry.[9] A single *jari* composition on a narrative theme may have from about fifty to over three hundred couplets and is generally framed by a Muslim *bandana* (invocatory passage) at the beginning or the end, or by a passage announcing the episode to be narrated or just terminated. Frequently the final couplets include a *bhanita* (oral signature). Thus there is nothing unusual in those *jari* songs which consist of objective narrations in *payar* verse.

The lyrical verse structures in other songs range from modifications of *payar* couplet structure to complex patterns of an infinite variety. The *jari boyati* may choose an elaborate melodic style which alters an originally *payar*

text. Or he, or the *dohar*, may break up a homogeneous *payar* chant with refrains and ode-like digressions, if not extraneous songs, in non-couplet complex verse structures called *dhuyagan*.[10] These are generally used, as expected, for digressional material of a subjective nature -- elegaic songs, religio-philosophic meditations and *bandana*, and social songs.

What is unusual, however about *jari* composition is the existence of narrative *payar* verses which have been altered into lyrical *dhuya* forms to suit an elaborate melodic structure; or, in the reverse, when a non-*payar* verse structure may be expressed by a chant-like binary melodic structure and consequently give the aural impression of narrative *payar* verse. The Procrustean treatment of texts to suit melodies is accomplished by a-grammatic alterations in the text: repetition of words or syllables, interjections, lengthening of syllables, unusual changes in stress, unusual treatment of caesurae, etc. -- all of which may or may not appear in the textual transcriptions depending on how faithful the transcriptions are to the oral performance.

Different combinations of thematic material with verse structure are listed below. Examples of *jari* songs which illustrate each combination are given in the Appendix to this paper.

1) Epic narration in *payar* verse:
   a) standard
   b) altered
2) Epic narration in *dhuya* verse:
   a) *tripadi* couplet
   b) three-line verse
   c) seven-line verse
3) Epic narration in mixed *payar* and prose
4) Religio-philosophic prelude (i.e., *bandana*) in *payar*
5) Mock epic interlude in *dhuya*

The existence of these structural options in one repertory suggests that *jari* singing is a special class of narrative song in which the attention given to musical invention is as important as the clarity and scope of the textual themes. The apparent freedom to choose different tune styles and therefore verse styles to express the same literary themes suggests that a change from one style to another is an integral part of a *jari* performance. This change may happen within a predominantly *payar* chant as well as preceding or following it, and theoretically the reverse could happen within a lyrical composition changing it to a *payar* chant.

It is not clear in the existing transcriptions to what extent the *jari* singer alternates his verse structure within one recital. Although a mixture of *payar* (or other couplet forms) with more complex structures is found elsewhere in Bengali narrative poetry, it has produced, in the case of *jari* songs, integral compositions so that the non-*payar* passages are complete in themselves exhibiting an independent closed form in the way one aria in an

oratorio or opera is complete in itself. Since a substantial number of non-*payar* songs are included in the collections it is assumed they are integrated in some way into the standard *payar* recitals. Furthermore, a *jari* session, if purified of extraneous lyrical songs, still reflects the variety of song forms found in the Muharram celebrations. Thus it is especially appropriate that *jari* verse forms be characterized by alternations from one kind to another.

The heterogeneous aspect of *jari* verse structures reflects, on one hand, the degeneration of traditional *payar* recitations -- probably in more or less repetitive chant styles -- and, on the other hand, the formation of a more complex and sophisticated bardic style. This more modern concept of bardic chant is a natural result of the enlarged repertories of the 19th century performances, reinforced in the case of *jari* songs by its congeneracy with Muharram pageantry, drama, narrative and elegiac song.

B. *Diction*

The dialectal morphology of *jari* vocabulary and Perso-Arabic loan words necessary to *jari* Islamic themes are prominent features in the *jari* texts. Proper names of persons and places, especially when taken from Karbala events, convey the Bengali audience to exotic places and events: Yezid, Sokhina, Ashgor Ali, Duldul, Korbala (Karbala), Demask (Damascus), Farat (Euphrates), *poigambar* (prophet), *shipai* (soldier), *zohor* (step-brother). However, much of this Perso-Arabic vocabulary is common to all Muslim religio-historic literature as is the dialectal morphology of the native vocabulary common to all folk texts. Vocabulary alone does not characterize *jari* texts.

More distinctly *jari* than the vocabulary is the poetic diction. *Jari* diction is characterized by the absence of descriptive and metaphoric language, even in lyrical passages. On the other hand, *jari* texts are vividly descriptive though the reproduction of direct speech: the noble words of young heroes, the anguished laments of bereaved women, or the gentle parting between close relatives.

In the *jari* passages quoted in the Appendix are examples of direct speech reproduced artistically by the *jari* poet to convey the mood and personality of the speaker. In example 2 c the audience has no difficulty picturing the humble but sensitive *kokilo* dutifully transmitting his terrible news. Likewise in the same passage, the speech within a speech, that of the dying child Ashgor Ali, is additionally moving; the audience can visualize the young boy thinking of his mother and the comfort he would like to give her. In this short passage a whole world of anguish is recreated.

Alliteration, assonance, repeated sounds, words and phrases -- these are common to all Bengali poetry. They are effectively combined in *jari* composition to portray the emotional state of the speaker; example 2 b illustrates how the repetition of the same sounds (e and i) emphasizes the anguish of

Husein's family. Example 1 b shows how double, as well as single, caesurae and unusual divisions in words and phrases, causing stress syncopation are aurally arresting and reproduce the *cri de coeur* of the widow. Dramatic diction conveys the emotional content of *jari* themes more directly to the audience than could physical descriptions; the impact is immediate.

Conclusion

In sum, *jarigan* are a composite repertory of different literary themes having a common core -- sacrifice, and of different poetic styles integrated into one medium of expression -- epic verging on dramatic poetry.

The epic quality of *jari* texts is not as remarkable as the dramatic. Actual play-acting is subject to the orthodox frown in Muslim society cast on the representational arts. Muslim Bengalis, however, have a natural instinct to play-act (*khela*). Mime is excused as part of the religious pageantry of Muharram, but it did not evolve into a full-fledged drama as it did in the *tazia* of the Middle East. It is in the *jari* recitations that the dramatic instinct surfaces most clearly in an artistic form, resembling drama without *being* drama. *Jarigan*, then, are specifically pseudo-dramas, equivalent in form to the *jatra*, but with heroic themes of *mahakavya* proportions.

Thus the *jari* repertory has made specific and original contributions to Bengali folk literature -- a Muslim thematic repertory depicting man's struggle against himself to achieve God's will, and a highly dramatic mode of bardic verse -- the bardic drama. From "songs of grief" have come not only a Muslim *mahakavya*, but, paradoxically, a *mahajatra*.

APPENDIX

Examples of *jari* verse structure and diction.

Example 1: Epic narration in *payar* verse.

A) Standard *payar:*

Bahire thakiya ghora, kandite lagilo.
Bibigon shuniya tokhon, bahire ashilo.
(Refrain) - Ore ami ki herilam (aha re).[77]

(While the horse stood outside, it began to cry.
When the wives heard it, then, alas, they went
outside. "Oh, what have I lost, alas!")

B) Altered *payar:* (The same strophe written as heard. The dotted lines represent melodic expansion.)

A . . . bahire thakiya ghora re. . . .
Kandite lagilo . . . Bibigon shuniya tokhon go mori, aha re.
O, bahire ashilo. . . .
Ore ami ki herilam, aha re.

Example 2: Epic narration in *dhuya* verse structure.

A) A strophe in *tripadi* couplet form:

Ore ga tolo Sokina Mukher kotha jai shona,
Nishi probhat holo.
Ore ron kholate baje kara Darajate shipai khara
Aj bujhi mor rone jete holo. [12]

(Ore! raise your body, Sokina; listen to the words of my mouth. It is early dawn. Ore! a soldier erect in the door beats the war-drum, the double ended drum. Today I know I must go to battle.)

B) A three-line strophe:

Diner bati nibhe jai, nibhe jai, dekbi jodi
Hai, madina, hai mori hai ai chute ai,
Holo âdhar puri.[13]

(The light of day goes away, goes away; let us see, go see whether, alas, in Madina . . . alas, o me, alas, Fleeing let us go . . . The place has become dark.)

C) A seven-line strophe:
A, Probhat kalo kokilo re bole: ga tolo dukhini ma.
Khobor korte aichi re, ami kalo kokila.
Ami pakhi bone thaki, bone amar basha.
Ashgor Ali mout re dekhe, pran ar bache na.
A mout kale bolche Ashgor:
Koiu, koiu, koiu re, khobor amar mayer age re. [14]
Tomar Ashgor geche re mara daron Kafer re hate.

(Ah!
At dawn the kokilo bird said; Raise your body, sad mother.
I have come to give you news; I am the black kokilo bird.
I, a bird, live in the woods. My nest is in the woods.
I saw the death of Ashgor Ali; his life no longer remains.
Ah! At the time of death Ashgor said:
- Koi-o! koi-o! koi-o! -- Take this news to my mother.
Your Ashgor has died by the hand of the terrible Kafir.)

Example 3: Epic narration in mixed *payar* and prose.

.....
Shono, shono, jonni-go, shono-go ashiya,
Amar saki Sokhinake korte hobe biya?

Bibijan bolche, "Kasem, shotya kotha. Ei prosno tor pitaji tor cacajaner kache korechilo. Nanan śok-taper jantra-nay ami shob bhule giyechilam. Amar adeś, tui Sokhinake biye kore rone jatra koro."

Kasem bolche, Jonnigo amar monete poreche,
Mṛtyukale babjan koboc diya geche.[15]
.....

Payar: (Listen, listen mother, come and listen. Shall I marry Sokhina?
Prose: His mother said, "Kasem, you speak the truth. Your father put this question to your uncle. In my grief I forgot it all. You have my Permission; after you have married Sokhina, you must go to battle.
Payar: Kasem said, "Mother, I remember that my father when he died gave me an amulet.")

Example 4: *Bandana* in *payar* verse.

Are bolo Allah bolo momin loho bhai ek bar,
Are shar kebol Allahjir nam ashar shongshar.
Are O, munishi durlob jonom na hoibe ar,
Are ar na milabe Allah ei chander bazar.
Ar ki hobe manush jonom boshbo shari shari,
Ar ki milabe Allah ei chander kachari.
Din gelo re Kodar banda ghirlo maya roseh,
Are ei duniya shuker banijya keu kande keu hashe.[16]

(Are! Say Allah. Say, believer. Take His name now, brother;
Are! Only the name of Allah is good; worldly concerns are without goodness.
Are o! The worthy saintly life will never come again.
Allah will not mingle again with this bazar-of-the-moon.
Will there ever again come the birth of men? Shall I sit side by side (with them)?
The day has passed. The will of God is lost in the illusions and passions of men.
This world is a business of sorrow. Some weep, some laugh.)

Example 5: Interlude song in *dhuya* verse

Are gun gun gun, nagor Ali biye kore shagor Alir bon.
Hukkai chom chom mokkai tan,
Chegor Ali, Bengor Ali, Tegor Ali tan;

Tal guma gum baje burir chorkar tan, gun gun gun.[17]

(Are gun, gun, gun! Town Ali is marrying the sister
of Sea Ali.
They smoke the hooka noisily in Mecca;
Chegor Ali, Bengor Ali, Tegor Ali puff.
Playing the gum-a-gum beat they pull on the spinning
wheel of the old woman. Gun, gun, gun!)

FOOTNOTES

1. Jasimuddin, *Jarigan* (Dacca: Kendriyo Bangla-Union Board, 1968, p. 1.

2. Dr. Shaikh Ghulam Maqsud Hilali, *Perso-Arabic Elements in Bengali*, ed. by Dr. Muhammad Enamul Haq (Dacca: Central Board for Development of Bengali, 1967), p. 104; see also Dr. Muhammad Shahidullah and Prof. Muhammad Abdul Hai, *Traditional Culture of East Pakistan (Dacca:* University of Dacca, 1963), p. 26. The word *jari* or *jarigan* does not appear in the standard Bengali-to-English dictionaries (Rf. Bibliography).

3. D. C. Sen, *Eastern Bengal Ballads*, p. xxxiii. Pathan rulers had been in Bengal since the early thirteenth century, but it is the history of East Bengal that is of particular importance to the development of *jari* songs, and so the reign of Husein Shah provides an initial date for Muslim rule in that region. Thanks to the peace which was enjoyed at the time and the patronage of Husein Shah and his administrators, his reign was especially productive in Bengali literature. (Cf. J. C. Ghosh, *Bengali Literature* (London: Oxford University Press, 1948), p. 46.

4. For descriptions of *marsiya* singing, see Ivar Lassy, *The Muharram Mysteries Among the Azerbeijan Turks of Caucasia*, (Helsingfors: University of Finland, 1916), pp. 63-72. Cf. Regula Qureshi, "Islamic Music in an Indian Environment: The Shi'a Majlis" (unpublished paper delivered at the annual meeting of the American society for Ethnomusicology, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, Nov., 1971).

5. For a synopsis of *tazia* scenes read A. Chodzko, *Théâtre Persan, Choix de Téaziés ou Drames*, (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1878).

6. Jasimuddin, *op. cit.*, pp. 1, 8.

7. Jasimuddin, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

8. Cittaranjan Dev, *Banglar Polligiti*, (Calcutta: National Book Agency, 1966), p. 89.

9. The derivation of the term *payar* and a brief description of *payar* prosody may be found in J. C. Ghosh, *Bengali Literature* (London: Oxford University Press, 1948), p. 36. A more detailed history of *payar* may be found in S. K. Chatterji, *The Origin and Development of the Bengali Language* (Calcutta: Calcutta University Press, 1926), Vol. I, Chap. 2.

10. The term *dhuya* has many uses and deserves a separate essay. Here it it used in the general sense of lyric verse and not in the more limited sense of "refrain" as translated in the standard Bengali-to-English dictionaries.

11. *Payar* couplet from "Song" number 3, Jasimuddin, *op. cit.*, p. 304.

12. *Tripadi* couplet from "Song" number 9, Jasimuddin, *op. cit.*, p. 306.

13. Three-line verse from a selected example, number 11, Dr. Shri Ashutosh Bhattacarya, *Bangiya Lok-Shangit Ratnakar*, (Calcutta: Pascimabanga Lok-Shangiti Gabesana Parisad, 1966), p. 558.

14. Seven-line verse from "Song" number 12, Jasimuddin, *op. cit.*, p. 307.

15. Passage from the *Kasem-Sokhinar Jari*, Jasimuddin, *op. cit.*, p. 176.

16. Passage from "Song" number 1, Jasimuddin, *op. cit.*, p. 303.

17. "Song" number 5, Jasimuddin, *op. cit.*, p. 305.

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There are no recordings (cylinder, disc, tape, film) of *jari* songs in performance with the exception of some which were made by the author for Jasimuddin's book on *Jarigan*, and with the possible exception that there may be some recordings included in Dr. Baké's large collection of Bengali folk songs which are not yet accessible to the public. Thus there are no transcriptions of a complete *jari* session. Only individual compositions are available in transcription, selected examples isolated from their original context. The descriptive introductions to these collections, of which Jasimuddin's is the most detailed, are not based on adequate eye-witness experience, and need further details in order for the scholar to reconstruct the *jari* repertory in performance and to assess the significance of its various forms.

To complement the source material found in the anthologies it is necessary to consult literature on related genres: the *tazia* of the Middle East and the bardic poetry of Bengal which resembles most closely *jari* songs in thematic content and performance styles. Since it is assumed that the reader is aware of the contextual (historical and social) material to be found in the standard histories of Bengali literature (D.C. Sen, Gosh, etc.) this bibliography lists only those works on Bengali literary history and on *tazia* which are directly pertinent to a study of *jarigan*.

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VIII. THE GOVERNMENT OF EASTERN BENGAL AND ASSAM AND "CLASS RULE" IN EASTERN BENGAL, 1905-1912

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During its brief life the Government of Eastern Bengal and Assam injected itself vigorously and controversially into the existing socio-economic system of Eastern Bengal to achieve clearly formulated political objectives.[1] These goals were related to the broad political motives which lay behind the 1905 partition of Bengal and to the more immediate interests of the new provincial government. Through its employment, education and agrarian policies, the Eastern Bengal and Assam Government sought to strike at its Hindu *bhadralok* opponents and to win allies among the majority Muslim population of the Eastern Bengal districts. In this manner it hoped to end the political threat to its own permanence growing out of the continuing anti-partition agitation, and to terminate what it regarded as a deleterious "class rule" in Eastern Bengal by the Hindu landowning, money-lending, professional and clerical classes.

While the phrase "class rule" was an expression used by the Eastern Bengal and Assam Government in a particular context, that of the domination of the educational system by the Hindus, it summed up the provincial government's basic attitude toward the socio-economic system prevailing in Eastern Bengal. To the Eastern Bengal and Assam officials, "class rule" meant the dominance in Eastern Bengal of the Hindu *bhadralok*, or "respectable people," generally members of the three highest Bengal castes, the Brahmins, Kayasths and Baidyas. It was largely the members of these castes who had most readily accepted English education, who had come to dominate the legal profession and to fill the administrative offices of government, and who had taken advantage of the introduction of English concepts of property to acquire control of the land.[2]

Since what follows below is largely a study of British policy toward the Eastern Bengal *bhadralok*, some emendatory comments are in order regarding the nature of that social group. The term *bhadralok* itself was probably a British creation, albeit one increasingly employed by Bengalis themselves by the turn of the century. While *bhadralok* status was generally limited to members of the three highest Bengal castes, membership in this social elite depended primarily upon the acquisition of education, both Western and Sanscritic, the cultivation of an enriched literary form of the Bengali language, the abstention from unseemly occupations, and in most cases, an adherence to traditional values. High caste alone did not guarantee *bhadralok* status. Nor did *bhadralok*

status insure a comfortable existence. In fact, the growing surplus of educated and partially educated white-collar job seekers, and the increasing subinfudation of landholdings, had brought about a situation in which many formerly prosperous *bhadralok* families had been reduced to poverty.[3] The British were not totally insensitive to the complexity of Bengali society or to the growing economic problems of many *bhadralok* families. Increasingly, however, it suited their purposes to lump together all Bengali Hindus, both of high and middling castes, as oppressors of the peasantry and opponents of the Raj.

The policies of the Eastern Bengal and Assam Government, therefore, did not derive soley from the circumstances prevailing after the partition of Bengal. For some decades Bengal and Government of India officials had viewed with dismay the growing demand of the educated classes for a greater role in the government of the country, and had grown increasingly hostile toward the *bhadralok* control of existing institutions. Antipathy toward the monopoly of education and the public services by the Hindu elite in undivided Bengal played an important role in the discussions preceding the abolition of the competitive examinations for the public services in Bengal in 1904, and in Lord Curzon's Universities Act of the same year.[4] This same hostility toward the *bhadralok* permeated the discussions leading up to the partition of Bengal.[5]

It is important to note that the interests of the Muslims of Eastern Bengal did not figure prominently in the various anti-*bhadralok* measures of Lord Curzon's administration. In so far as the interests of the various non-Bengali Hindu populations of Greater Bengal entered its deliberations, the Government of India thought in terms of the desire of the Biharis, Oriyas and Assamese to end a kind of subordinate colonialism carried on by the Bengalis in the diverse regions yoked to Bengal Proper. As conceived, the partition of Bengal was designed to separate two centers of *bhadralok* power at Dacca and Calcutta, and until late in the discussions the British showed little interest in the Muslims of Eastern Bengal.

It was the unexpected enthusiasm on the part of Eastern Bengal's Muslim leaders, with the Nawab of Dacca in the fore, which raised the status of the Muslims in the eyes of the Government of India. Needing evidence to demonstrate that the proposed partition was not universally unpopular, Lord Curzon's Government welcomed this show of support from men who claimed to speak for the majority of the population of the districts affected. The initial partition scheme, announced in December 1903, provided only for the transfer of the Chittagong Division and the Dacca and Mymensingh districts of the Dacca Division. While politically inspired, it was a scheme which had been taken up from time to time for several decades, and it possessed a certain administrative and geographic rationale. Complicated intrigues and negotiations carried on in late 1904 between prominent Eastern Bengal Muslims and Bengal officials, however, impressed upon the architects of partition the previously unrealized possibilities of an even larger eastern province in which the interests of the Muslims might predominate.[6] As a consequence, the scheme which was ultimately adopted included all of Eastern Bengal as well as districts of Northern Bengal which were linguistically and geographically uncharacteristic of the majority of the transferred districts. The single denominator in the districts severed from Bengal, was that all possessed a Muslim majority.[7]

Because the Muslims became such an important factor in British policy, some observations are in order regarding the nature of Muslim society in Eastern Bengal. Despite the egalitarian underpinnings of Islam, the experience of centuries in the Indian milieu had left its mark in a variety of ways. A sharp social gulf separated the *ashraf*, those who claimed high birth and adopted the title of Sayyid or Shaykh, and the converts from aboriginal tribes and low Hindu castes who made up the vast bulk of the Muslim peasantry. The working of this dichotomy, which was not unlike that which set the Hindu *bhadralok* apart from their social and ritual inferiors, can be seen in several ways. The *Fara'idi* sect, a nineteenth century puritan revivalist movement which was connected with opposition to the oppression of Hindu landlords and European indigo planters, gained a strong following among the Muslim peasantry of Eastern Bengal while leaving the Muslim upper class unaffected.[8] Conversely, organized political activity undertaken in response to the Hindu anti-partition agitation was largely restricted to upper class Muslims. The Provincial Muhammadan Association, established under the patronage of the Nawab of Dacca, was unabashedly elitist. While it aimed at becoming "the mouthpiece of the entire Muhammadan population, whereby they might represent to Government their views and legitimate aspirations," the prospectus for the new political organization, published in October 1905, stipulated that membership should be open only to "men of talents and abilities of social position and dignity."[9]

This social division notwithstanding, the British recognized that the Muslim population held great potential as an ally. While the Muslim elite was quite small and thoroughly outclassed by the Hindus in the competition for education and employment, the Nawab of Dacca and a few other large Muslim landholders retained great prestige throughout the Muslim population as symbols of an earlier, better, era. Moreover, the partition and the opportunities which it suggested, served to unite the Muslim population against a common enemy. The small educated and professional class saw the opportunity for patronage and the support of government in the competition with the Hindu *bhadralok*, while the peasantry saw a new chance to assert themselves against their Hindu landlords, who had fallen into official disfavor.

Seriously pressed by the anti-partition agitation and uncertain of the permanence of his new charge, the Lieutenant-Governor of Eastern Bengal and Assam, J. B. Fuller, moved quickly to consolidate the emerging support among the Muslim population. In a variety of ill-advised ways, Fuller and his officers demonstrated their partiality for the Muslims and their antipathy for their *bhadralok* opponents.[10] These injudicious actions earned them the enmity of the Bengali nationalists and served to raise the expectations of the Muslims.

The Eastern Bengal and Assam Government chose, as its first important policy initiative, an attack upon the Hindu monopoly of the clerical posts in government offices. Using the occasion offered by a petition for greater consideration in employment from the Buddhist Association of Chittagong, Sir Bampfylde Fuller propounded the argument that each community ought to have its proportionate share of appointments, and that the government ought to decide, when an opening arose, "the community which may be considered to have a claim to it."[11]

Fuller articulated this policy proposal in a circular letter to divisional commissioners, district magistrates and judges of May 25, 1906. The letter and attached statements which issued over the signature of the Chief Secretary, P. C. Lyon, called attention to the fact that while the Muslims constituted two-thirds of the population of the new province, they held only one-sixth of the ministerial office posts. The letter rejected the argument that Muhammadans were rightfully entitled to only such a proportion of posts as the ratio of English literate Muslims to English literate Hindus, but it also conveyed Fuller's judgment that for the immediate future a figure of one-third Muslims was the maximum feasible goal. The letter called for suggestions from the provincial officials as to ways "to secure the practical adoption of a policy which has long been approved by Government, but which has hitherto been found difficult to bring into active operation." Lyon instructed the provincial officers to invite Muslim bodies "to maintain a list of candidates for the public service who have passed the B.A., the F. A., and the Entrance Examinations, with a note of the recommendations that can be made in the case of each candidate."[12] Fuller authorized Lyon to send copies of the circular letter to all of the important *Anjumans* in Eastern Bengal, as well as to Calcutta Muslim organizations.[13]

The so-called "Lyon Circular" won enthusiastic acclaim from the Muslim upper class as potentially the most beneficial manifestation of the controversial Lieutenant-Governor's pro-Muslim sympathies, and the Muslims grew apprehensive when Fuller's abrupt resignation in August 1906 raised the spectre of a reversal of policy. With the Nawab of Dacca in a leading role, Muslim leaders innundated the Government of India with memorials regretting Fuller's resignation. In conveying a memorial from the Muhammadans of Dacca on September 16, 1906, the Nawab begged assurance that the partition would not be overturned, and, should a change in policy be contemplated, for an opportunity for the Muslims "to vindicate Sir Bampfylde Fuller from the cruel and cowardly aspersions of his traducers and detractors."[14] The Muslims similarly lionized Fuller in subsequent "Partition Day" celebrations held in conjunction with the first annual meeting of the Provincial Muhammedan Association. All of the resolutions laid stress on the need to uphold the policy established in the "Lyon Circular" of May 25, 1906.[15]

The Muslim fears proved unfounded, however, for Fuller's successor, Sir Lancelot Hare, showed an even greater enthusiasm for curbing the prerogatives of the *bhadralok* and promoting the interests of the Muslims. In October 1906, with the assistance of the Chief Secretary, P. C. Lyon, Hare prepared to act upon the official responses to the May 25 circular letter and to embody the government's employment policy in the form of a resolution. Both Hare and Lyon rejected the advice of a number of senior officials that the relative proportion of English-knowing Hindus and Muslims ought to form the basis for apportioning posts. This view, in Lyon's opinion, would frustrate the attempt to significantly alter the status quo. "I venture to suggest," Lyon noted in a minute to Hare on October 24, 1906,

> that we must look beyond the proportion of qualified candiates and beyond the clerks themselves, and must consider the mass of the people, with whom we have to deal, and the necessity of encouraging education among the majority of the population.

In the Chief Secretary's opinion, "the narrower view which would include only the educated among the population would lend to the perpetuation of the class rule, which we desire to terminate."[16]

Hare's draft resolution, which he prudently submitted to Lord Minto on October 31, 1906, made reference to the earlier circular of the Fuller administration and cited the "general concensus of opinion that Mahamedans have not received as much employment as they have a right to demand or as they are qualified to hold." In explaining this disproportion, Hare stressed the overwhelming numbers of Hindu applicants, and the fact that the very preponderance of Hindus in government offices tended to perpetuate the imbalance. "This latter consideration," the draft resolution declared, "also explains the frequent exclusion in many offices of all but a few castes of Hindus, and has sometimes gone so far as to make of some offices almost a family gathering." The resolution called upon government officers, when filling posts and apprenticeships, to widely advertise the openings, to make direct approaches to Muslim associations, and to contact educational officers for their recommendations of appropriate candiates. With regard to increasing the proportion of Muslims, the draft resolution proposed that

> outside the Brahmaputra Valley Districts, a proportion of one-third Mahomedans is a very moderate proportion to aim at, and so long as this proportion is not attained, two out of three vacancies should, wherever suitably qualified candidates are forthcoming, be filled by this class.

In order to insure the execution of policy, the draft resolution proposed a form to be completed annually, in which officers would be required to report progress and to explain departures from the new standard.[17]

The proposed resolution on Muslim employment engendered a controversy within the Home Department. The Home Secretary, Herbert Risley, welcomed the resolution and felt that the political objections to it could be met by relating the resolution to an earlier, nearly forgotten, initiative by the Bengal Government to increase the number of Muslims in its offices.[18] Sir Harvey Adamson, the Home Member, however, regarded the proposed resolution of the Eastern Bengal and Assam Government as "both inaccurate and injudicious." The new proposal, he said, would "be read by the public along with Sir B. Fuller's letter dated the 25th May," which Adamson regarded as setting forth "startling propositions which have not been dissented from or softened by the terms of the circular."[19]

Adamson criticized the proposed resolution on a number of grounds. He condemned the policy of allowing political considerations to impair the efficiency of government offices, and he considered it highly undesirable that the government's Hindu clerks "should be made to feel that they are to suffer for the sins of disloyal agitators." Equally serious, Adamson regarded the figures worked up by the Eastern Bengal and Assam Government to justify its proposed policy as fallacious. He introduced figures from the Bengal Census Report which showed that of the total number of Hindus and Muslims in Eastern

Bengal literate in English, only 15.5 percent were from the latter community. Noting that figures introduced in Fuller's circular letter showed that the Muslims held 15.5 percent of the ministerial posts in the province, Adamson argued that they therefore held "the exact proportion of . . . appointments to which their education entitles them." With regard to the alleged disadvantage of certain Hindu castes, Adamson observed that the practice was of great antiquity and not in urgent need of correction. "Tacked on to the Mahomedan question," he said, "it will be regarded by the public as merely an insidious way of bringing the larger question to the front."[20]

Adamson's strong opposition to the proposed resolution caused the Viceroy to hesitate,[21] but ultimately Risley and the Eastern Bengal and Assam officials succeeded in overcoming the Home Member's objections and Lord Minto's reservations. As a result of Risley's advice given in a private meeting with P. C. Lyon,[22] and consultations between Hare, Minto and Adamson, the Eastern Bengal and Assam Government revised the proposed resolution so as to remove its most objectionable features. The new resolution included an elaborate introduction suggested by Risley, which was intended to convey an impression of historical continuity with the innocuous 1885 orders of the Bengal Government, and it avoided mention of a specific quota for Muslims in government offices.[23] Sir Harvey Adamson now found the resolution to be "entirely unobjectionable,"[24] and with Minto's approval it was published as a supplement to the *Eastern Bengal and Assam Gazette* of February 16, 1907.[25]

In reality the resolution differed little from the previous draft, and the Bengali *bhadralok* found it ominous and objectionable in the extreme. In keeping with the new spirit of nationalism and self-sufficiency which flowed from the *Swadeshi* campaign, the Bengali press could not admit that a patriotic Bengali would even seek government service. Nonetheless, press comment was understandably bitter. *Bande Mataram* professed to welcome the resolution "Muhammadanising the service" in Eastern Bengal and Assam, arguing that "the device to keep away the Hindus helps to create a strong feeling of contempt of Government service, the desire for which retards the work of national regeneration."[26] *Amrita Bazar Patrika* expressed similar sentiments, and predicted that the government would be the loser. "The Muhammadans," the paper wrote, "are welcome to Government appointments, for if they fail to give satisfaction, it is the Government which will suffer."[27]

As in the case of the Hindu domination of the public services, the Eastern Bengal and Assam Government regarded the *bhadralok* monopoly and control of higher education in the province as an undesirable feature of Bengal life and one deserving urgent attention. The government regarded the schools and colleges, especially the private institutions, as hotbeds of sedition and its greatest political problem. As a first goal, therefore, it sought to gain complete control over all sources of higher education. Additionally, it labored to upgrade higher education in the province generally, so as to make it unnecessary for Eastern Bengal boys to be exposed to the reputed baneful influences of student life in Calcutta, and to provide increased educational opportunities for Muslims.

At the time of its creation the province of Eastern Bengal and Assam contained four government colleges and seven unaided private colleges. Government colleges were located at Dacca, Rajshahi, Gauhati and Chittagong. The seven private colleges included Aswini Kumar Datta's Braja Mohan Institution, at Barisal, the Victoria College, Comilla, the Jagannath College, Dacca, the City College, Mymensingh, the Pabna Institution, and the Murari Chand College, Sylhet. Only the government colleges at Dacca and Rajshahi, and the Braja Mohan Institution, ranked as first grade colleges.[28]

Soon after the new administration got down to work Fuller's Director of Public Instruction, Henry Sharp, began to formulate ambitious plans for the control, improvement and depoliticization of collegiate education. In pursuing its objectives, the provincial government received vital assistance from two quarters: the increasingly stringent affiliation requirements which followed from the operation of Lord Curzon's Universities Act, and substantial Imperial grants to facilitate the reform of education. The new affiliation standards proved especially threatening to the unaided private colleges, those "starveling schools for turning out half-educated and discontented politicians"[29] which were such a thorn in the provincial government's side. Unable to raise funds for the required staff, buildings, laboratories, scientific apparatus and hostels, they faced the possibility of disaffiliation and ruin. Armed with an Imperial grant of Rs. 105,000 for unaided colleges, the provincial government moved to capitalize on the situation and gain control of these troublesome institutions.[30]

Under Fuller's administration the government moved less systematically and ruthlessly than under his successor, Sir Lancelot Hare. Fuller initially thought of using the grant as a reward for good behavior, and he took an interest in the Murari Chand College of Sylhet, founded and supported by Raja Girish Chandra Ray. "Discipline was fair," the Lieutenant-Governor noted in early 1906, "and the students have shown restraint during the excitement of the last three months."[31] Fuller planned to spend Rs. 50,000 of the Imperial grant on a new building for this college alone, in exchange for the formation of a managing committee which would include government representatives, and the execution of a trust deed on the new facility. The plan came to grief, however, when the college staff discourteously treated Sharp during a visit in the spring of 1906. The government suspected that the Raja was behind the snub, and refused to accept his profferred explanation.[32]

With Fuller's approval, Sharp employed the opposite political logic in making an unsuccessful approach to Aswini Kumar Datta's Braja Mohan College. Despite Datta's growing notoriety as a leader of the boycott movement, Sharp respected the nationalist leader as a committed and effective educator. The college badly needed additional buildings and a hostel, and Sharp hoped, rather unrealistically, that Datta could be persuaded to accept a grant. In fact, the Director of Public Instruction hoped to give the bulk of the Imperial grant to the Braja Mohan College and to the only other "respectable" college, the Pabna Institution. Sharp felt that in view of the Braja Mohan Institution's status as a first-grade college, the University "would contemplate a large subvention with complacency."

In addition, he felt that a substantial donation would help to win over the alienated population of Bakarganj. In the case of both institutions, Sharp wished to make the grants contingent on commitments regarding the efficient and non-political operation of the schools and "a solid local subscription."[33]

This scheme also met with failure, however, as Aswini Kumar Datta and his associates would not rise to the government's bait. During a visit to the college by Sharp the authorities were "most polite," but not interested. In the face of the new University standards the school officials declared that they would not seek affiliation in Science, and that they hoped " ' to meet the requirements of the Arts Course without troubling the Government for a lump grant.' "[34]

Following these failures during Fuller's administration, Sir Lancelot Hare's government turned its attention toward the Jagannath College at Dacca, and the City College, Mymensingh. Initially, the government again met with failure, as the colleges were "fighting shy of the control involved thereby," and the grants offered "were not sufficient to induce them to surrender their liberty." The government advanced additional money out of provincial revenues, however, and with the assistance of the University Inspector of Colleges, Dr. Roy, it succeeded in bringing the institutions around. "Apparently," the Chief Secretary noted in a minute to Hare, ". . . Dr. Roy has made it clear to these colleges that they have got to comply with the University's regulation and requirement or be disaffiliated, and their only means of acquitting themselves as the University requires is to get a grant from the Government . . . which means they must swallow the Government terms, or they break."[35] Both the Chief Secretary, H. LeMesurier, and the Commissioner of the Dacca Division, R. Nathan, foresaw enormous political advantage coming from "the surrender of these two colleges at the government's mercy as "striking testimony to the efficiency of the University's regulations as remodelled, and . . . a complete justification of the Universities Act, and the Educational policy which inspired it."[36]

The terms of the agreement between the Jagannath College and the provincial government closely parallel the terms which the government exacted in all subsequent cases, and illustrate the extent to which the private colleges were forced to give up their liberty. In return for a capital grant of Rs. 85,000 and a recurring grant of Rs. 1,000 per month for five years, the college executed a trust deed giving the government the power to take over the entire property of the college should it "cease to be efficient or should it be managed on disloyal lines." The governing body of the college duly elected H. LeMesurier, now Commissioner of Dacca, as its president. As its own representatives on the expanded body, the government appointed Khwajeh Muhammad Yusuf, a leading Dacca Muslim and a relative of the Nawab's, and Lt.-Col. R. N. Campbell, I.M.S. Until the required building of a hostel for Muhammadan students, the college was directed to rent accommodation for no less than fifteen Muhammadan students (there were presently twelve enrolled). Thereafter, the government stipulated that "the accommodation to be supplied to Muhammadan

students shall not be less than the Government may declare necessary."[37]

By 1908 the program for capturing the private colleges was well in hand, and in a confidential letter of December 16, 1908 the provincial government candidly stated its broad aims regarding collegiate education. "The Lieutenant-Governor," wrote the Officiating Chief Secretary, H. LeMesurier,

> considers that hardly anything is more essential for the future peace of this province than that it should train its own youth within its own boundaries and under adequate control, ... The Government of Eastern Bengal and Assam has had this fundamental aspect of the situation forced on its most serious attention from the outset and has set itself steadily to gain control of all sources of collegiate education and so to remodel them as to provide adequate facilities for the whole Province up to the highest stages. The change in the Universities' regulations gave the necessary opportunity; it was taken and a large measure of success has been attained.[38]

Ultimately, the provincial government rested its educational program on the government colleges at Dacca, Chittagong, Gauhati and Rajshahi, and the newly subsidized and "remodeled" private institutions, the Jagannath College at Dacca, the Murari Chand College, Sylhet, the Victoria College, Comilla, and the City College, Mymensingh. The Murari Chand College was subsequently provincialized. The government allowed the Pabna Institution to wither on the vine, while the Braja Mohan Institution remained utterly beyond the Pale, though a constant source of anxiety both for its involvement in the nationalist cause and for its drawing power.[39]

The Eastern Bengal and Assam Government made its most damaging attack on the *bhadralok* position in Eastern Bengal through its agrarian policies. A combination of circumstances had served to raise the level of agrarian tension in Eastern Bengal even before the partition, and the policies of the new provincial government seriously aggravated the already estranged relationship between landlord and tenant. In addition, the Eastern Bengal and Assam Government's open pro-Muslim bias, its courting of the Nawab of Dacca, and its known hostility toward the *Swadeshi* boycotters served to encourage the growth of a communal hostility which may have had little relationship to economic concerns. In some combination or combinations, the provincial government's pro-Muslim bias, its undisguised hostility toward its *bhadralok* political opponents, friction induced by the *Swadeshi* movement, wild rumors that partition had ushered in the return of *Nawabi* rule and underlying economic grievances, resulted in widespread communal violence during 1906 and 1907. While the overt and underlying causes of the incidents varied, the end result was always mob action by Muslims against Hindus, and the looting of Hindu shopkeepers and money-lenders. The most serious violence occurred in 1907 and was touched by riots which ensured during a visit to Comilla by the Nawab of Dacca. The most prolonged and serious riots, however, were confined to

Mymensingh district, an area with a large and turbulent Muslim peasantry and a long history of agrarian conflict.[40]

Whatever its sympathies, the provincial government could not tolerate the scale of violence which transpired in Mymensingh district. The 1907 disturbances were put down with large forces of military police and armed police reserves, and the jails were soon filled with Muslim Ryots who had run amuck. For political reasons, however, the provincial government could let remain the resultant "erroneous sense of injustice in the minds of the cultivators." The depredations of the Muslims, the local government reported to the Government of India, "had mainly been directed against the money-lenders who had oppressed them and against whom they had just cause of complaints, and the severe action taken by the authorities left them more than ever at the mercy of this class.[41] To restore the confidence of the Muhammadans the provincial government proposed two courses: the immediate undertaking of a record-of-rights survey in Mymensingh, jumping the district ahead of Dacca on an already undertaken twenty-four year survey program,[42] and the injection of unprecedented funds into the co-operative credit movement in Mymensingh.

The Eastern Bengal and Assam Government had already assumed a leading role among the British Indian provinces in the promotion of co-operative credit societies, and its activities in this field had aroused the hostility of Hindu landlords and money-lenders. In a confidential report in 1907, the Registrar of Co-operative Credit Societies, Kiran Chandra De, attributed this hostility to the fact that the Hindus engaged in money-lending both for profit and as a way of keeping the tenants in "thraldom," and he forecaste that they would oppose "any . . . movement for improving the condition of the cultivators." De reported that he had heard it said

> that already the raiyats have learnt too much of their rights and do not show the landlords the same respect as before, and in some of these cases, openly defy them; the introduction of these societies will free them of financial obligation to the gentry, and will make them too independent to be tolerated; therefore, this movement will receive no encouragement from the *bhadraloks*.[43]

Both De and the provincial government saw the Registrar's religion as militating against his effectiveness in carrying out the scheme proposed for Mymensingh district, and for this purpose the government obtained the services on loan of the Bengal Registrar, W. R. Gourlay.[44] During the late summer and fall of 1907 Gourlay expended Rs. 32,000 in the Dewanganj thana of the Jamalpur sub-division to set up societies based on the joint security of the members, and laid the foundations for the work which would be carried on by K. C. De upon Gourlay's return to Bengal.[45]

On the eve of his departure for Bengal in late October 1907, Gourlay produced a report which reveals a quite different picture of agrarian relationships in the affected area and the causes of the disturbances than that held by the Eastern Bengal and Assam Government. Gourlay noted that the center of the most severe rioting, the Dewanganj thana, was largely part of the estate

of Sir Jotindra Mohan Tagore, which would pass with his death to an English syndicate. Gourlay classified the tenants into two broad categories: "*Sirkari raiyats*," holding tenure directly under the zamindar, and "*Jotdari raiyats*," or under-tenants. The Bengal officer asserted that the former were fully capable of looking after their rights, and had generally been successful in resisting illegal enhancements of the rent. The jotdari ryots, however, had little power, and their rents had been "enhanced time after time."[46]

The Bengal Registrar similarly divided the money lending classes into several categories, including the "village money-lender and general supplier, who is often a Muhammadan," and the "bazar Saha" who financed him. The tenants themselves, he said, lent money to their under-tenants when they accumulated a surplus. "The amlas of the zamindar," on the other hand, did "not lend money to any large extent."[47]

Whereas the provincial government placed a large measure of blame for the riots on the activities of the *Swadeshi* agitators, Gourlay regarded the underlying causes of the violence as purely economic. Further, he attributed the economic distress not to the existing social system, but rather, to the expansion of jute cultivation at the expense of subsistance crops. Early profits were squandered and the tenants had no money to harvest the subsequent crop. Having thus entered the familiar vicious circle of jute cultivation, the tenants plunged deeper and deeper into debt, and grew more and more jute.

Gourlay attributed the overt causes of the riots to the spread of malicious reports that the government had approved the looting of Hindus. In his view the Hindu money-lenders were attacked as scapegoats and out of greed. "Probably," he wrote,

> their [the Muhammadan] tenants' attention was directed especially against the Shahas and not against the Marwaris and Mohammadans, because the latter for the most part take their interest in jute and seldom sell up a custome; their loans bear enormous interest but are paid up and the account cleared each year: with the Shahas, however, it is different: the debts run from year's end to year's end and often end in mortgage or sale.[48]

While the Eastern Bengal and Assam Government disputed Gourlay's analysis of the riots, and chose to attribute the causes to landlord oppression and resentment at the activities of the Swadeshi boycotters,[49] his views were not, in any event, material to the government's objective. The provincial government was concerned to re-establish its credit with the Muslims and to reduce the causes of further friction. Upon taking over from Gourlay in late 1907 D. C. De expended another Rs. 20,000 to other villages in the affected area. In February 1908 the provincial government sought the sanction of the Government of India to its initial loans, and for an additional allotment of one lakh of rupees. The provincial government defended its unusual request by asserting that societies thus far funded had "brought relief to the political

situation and . . . restored confidence in the intentions of the Local Government among a population which would otherwise in all probability have become permanently estranged.[50] In late 1909 the provincial government secured a further loan of one lakh of rupees for the maintenance of societies established in the Jamalpur and Tangail sub-divisions of Mymensingh district. While generally opposed to this method of promoting co-operative credit -- it was, after all, not really co-operative -- the Government of Indian consented to the further allotment on political grounds. "It is politically of very great importance," wrote the Revenue and Agriculture Secretary, R. W. Carlyle, "to protect the Mymensingh cultivators from the usurious money lenders and this Department may strongly support the proposal of the Eastern Bengal and Assam Government."[51]

While the intent of its wide ranging attack on what it characterized as "class rule" by the Hindu *bhadralok* is clear, the effect of the Eastern Bengal and Assam Government's employment, education and agrarian policies is not entirely certain. Considered on the government's own terms of reference, its policies produced mixed results. Especially with regard to its education and employment policies, these results may be measured in a concrete way. When considered with reference to the larger social, political and economic questions involved, the results of the government's policies are less susceptible of precise measurement, though the evidence points to certain apparently inescapable conclusions.

For a number of reasons, the provincial government largely failed in its effort to increase the numbers of Muslims in its offices. Figures introduced upon request at the January 1911 session of the provincial Legislative Council proved disappointing indeed. In 1907 Muslims held 437 of 2,982 posts in the divisional offices, district offices and civil courts in Eastern Bengal. Though incomplete in the case the civil courts in one district, the figures for 1910 show an increase to 558 of 3,135 posts. The percentage of Muslims in government offices increased from 14.7 in 1907 to 17.8 in 1910. This slow but steady progress was partially offset, however, by developments within the departments. In the offices of the Inspector-General of Registration, where the Muslims were always strongly represented, their numbers underwent a slight relative decline during the period 1907-1910. Whereas they held 318 of 691 posts in 1907, they held only 282 of 627 posts in 1910. This represented a relative decline of one percent (46.0 in 1907 to 45.0 percent in 1910) as well as a real numerical decline of 36 posts. In the offices of the Director of Public Instruction and the Inspector-General of Police the Muslims made important gains, though the number of posts involved was substantially less. Because of this uneven performance, the Muslims were relatively worse off in 1910 than in 1907. In 1907, including the Assam Valley districts, the Muslims held 775 of 3,355 posts, or 23.1 percent of the total. In 1909 they held 845 of 3,810 posts, or only 22.0 percent of the total. The incomplete returns for 1910 show a further relative decline.[52]

The reasons for this failure cannot be identified precisely, but they may be surmised with some degree of confidence. In their replies to the May 25, 1906, circular letter on Muslim employment, many officers expressed aversion to the idea of preferring eligible but less qualified Muslims over better

qualified Hindu candidates,[53] and it seems likely that this opposition mitigated against the government's declare policy. Moreover, it is almost certain that the prime obstacle to increased Muslim employment had been, for some years, the dearth of qualified candiates. This situation was not one which could be easily or speedily rectified even with the provincial government's pro-Muslim educational policy, and it is significant that as late as 1917 the Bengal Government was still struggling with the problem of working up to a figure of one-third Muslims in its offices.[54]

In pursuit of its educational objectives the provincial government experienced greater success. It not only gained control of nearly all of the private colleges, but it produced a significant improvement in higher education in the province as well. The provincial government's policies, combined with the impact of the new affiliation standards, brought about substantial increases in the size and calibre of the staffs, and in the physical facilities of both the government and private aided colleges.

The list of accomplishments is impressive. The Rajshahi Government College was brought into conformity with the new University regulations to the B.A. standard in the basic subjects.[55] Both the Jagannath College, Dacca, and the Cotton College, Gauhati, were raised to first grade status.[56] With the assistance of the Government of India the provincial government effected great improvements in the Dacca Government College, making it the premier institution in the province with affiliation in all of the important subjects, including affiliation to the M.A. in English. By the end of 1911 Government colleges existed in all five divisions of the province, and all but the college at Sylhet, formerly the private Murarichand College, were first grade institutions.[57] Though other practical and political considerations were involved, the establishment of Dacca University following the reunification of Bengal in 1912 represented a direct outcome of the policies of the Government of Eastern Bengal and Assam.[58]

The Muslims especially gained as a result of the improvements in the public colleges to which they were most attracted, and from the required provision of hostels for Muslim students in the private colleges which were recipients of government aid. In 1906-07 a mere twelve Muslims in Eastern Bengal and Assam passed the First Arts examination and only one passed the examination for the B.A. This represented only 4.3 percent of the First Arts passes for the province and only 2.4 percent of the total B.A.'s awarded. In 1911-12, however, seventy-three Muslims passed the Intermediate examinations and fifteen passed the B.A. and B.Sc. examinations. As a consequence of this improved success the Muslim share of the total passes for Eastern Bengal and Assam students rose to 11.3 and 9.6 percent respectively.[59]

Though more difficult to document, the effect of the Eastern Bengal and Assam government's politically motivated agrarian loan scheme must have been substantial. In Mymensingh district alone the government expended some two and one-half lakhs of rupees on loans intended to reduce the influence of the Hindu moneylenders and landholders. The loan schemes, however, were not in the nature of conventional cooperative credit ventures. The Mymensingh loans derived solely from the government's desire to retain the sympathies of

the Muslims, whose communal passions it had inadvertantly inflamed with its anti-*bhadralok* policies, and whose depredations it had necessarily suppressed. While attempts to alter an admittedly inequitable *status quo* can hardly to condemned out of hand, however motivated, the provincial government based its policy on an inaccurate or inadequate picture of a most complicated agrarian system and placed too much reliance, for political reasons, on the use of scapegoats.

With respect to the Eastern Bengal and Assam government's underlying political objectives, the attack on the Hindu *bhadralok* preponderance proved to be counter-productive. The provincial government certainly failed in its overall objective of weakening the power of its political opponents. The danger to government did not come from its predominantly loyal Hindu clerks, from Hindu landlords, large and small, or, in the short run at any rate, from the *bhadralok* dominated private colleges. Rather, the threat to the provincial government and to British rule itself came from the increasing alienation of a formerly docile elite status group, and from a small cadre of dedicated revolutionaries. The provincial government's employment, education and agrarian policies held no terror for its implacable opponents, but proved a great source of irritation to the mass of the Hindus upon whose cooperation or acquiescence the continuance of British rule depended. These realities and general dissatisfaction with the Eastern Bengal and Assam administration strongly influenced the decision of Lord Hardinge and his advisors, in mid-1911, to propose the overturning of the partition and the reunification of Bengal.[60]

It remains to say something of the significance of this episode to subsequent developments in Bengal. The pro-Muslim bias of the Eastern Bengal and Assam government is well known, and the relationship between the partition and the heightening of Hindu-Muslim tension in Bengal is generally recognized.[61] The above has been an attempt to document the substantive ways in which the Government of Eastern Bengal and Assam sought to undermine the basis of *bhadralok* dominance in Eastern Bengal and to promote, for primarily political reasons, the interests of the Muslims. While the provincial government only succeeded, in the short run, in strengthening the opposition to its existence, it would appear that in the long run the policies of the Eastern Bengal and Assam administration served to seriously weaken the moral basis of the *bhadralok* position. At the same time, the partition and the subsequent reunification of Bengal provided a stimulus to the growth of Muslim political consciousness and to the entry of Muslims into the political arena whose importance cannot be over-emphasized. The objectives of the Eastern Bengal and Assam administration's education, employment and agrarian policies were not forgotten by subsequent Bengal administrations. Nor was the memory of the partition period forgotten by the Muslims. Whether the traumatic events which have shaken Eastern Bengal in the years since the first partition have been for good or ill is a question which cannot have a single answer. The Muslim of Bangala Desh and the Eastern Bengali Hindu refugee in West Bengal would not be likely to view these developments in the same light.

FOOTNOTES

1. This paper is derived from my dissertation research done in the West Bengal State Archives, Calcutta, the National Archives of India, New Delhi, and the India Office Library, London, during the academic year 1971-1972. My research was facilitated by a partial Junior Fellowship from the American Institute of Indian Studies, and by grants from the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University, and the Syracuse University South Asia Program. I wish to express my sincere gratitude for the assistance which was so kindly given to me.

2. The use of the term *bhadralok* has engendered a certain amount of controversy. For a thorough discussion of the nature and composition of this social group see John H. Broomfield, *Elite Conflict in a Plural Society: Twentieth-Century Bengal* (Berkeley, 1968), 5-20.

3. *Ibid.* With regard to the economic problems of the *bhadralok* in the late nineteenth century see *Bengal District Administration Committee, 1913-1914, Report* (Calcutta, 1915), and J. C. Jack, *The Economic Life of a Bengal District: A Study* (London, 1916).

4. For the attitudes which lay behind the Universities Act and the abolition of the competitive examinations for the public services see the following: G.O.I., Home Education A, May 1904, Progs. 67-76; Home Education A, Nov. 1904, Progs. 40-41; and Home Education A, Dec. 1904, Progs. 92-93.

5. This hostility toward the *bhadralok* received perhaps its most explicit statement in a minute by H. H. Risley of Dec. 6, 1904, in G.O.I., Home Public A, Feb. 1905, Progs. 155-167.

6. G.O.I., Home Public A, Feb. 1905, Progs. 155-167.

7. James Bourdillon, "The Partion of Bengal," *Journal of the Society of Arts*, LIV (Dec. 15, 1905), 112.

8. Muin-ud-Din Ahmad Khan, *History of the Fara' idi Movement in Bengal* (1818-1906), CXV-CXVII, 121.

9. *Mihir-o-Sudhakar* (Calcutta), Oct. 27, 1905, *R.N.P.B.*

10. See John R. McLane, "The 1905 Partition of Bengal and the New Communalism," in *Bengal East and West*, Alexander Lipski (ed.), Michigan State Asian Studies Center, South Asian Series, Occasional Paper No. 13, Winter 1970, pp. 40-77. Also, M. N. Das, *India Under Morley and Minto: Politics Behind Revolution, Repression and Reforms* (London, 1964), 36-42.

11. Minute by J. B. Fuller, Dec. 16, 1905, E.B.&A., Appointments A, May 1906, Progs. 8-23.

12. P. C. Lyon, Chief Sec., Govt. of E.B.&A., to Commissioners of Divisions (copies forwarded to District and Sessions Judges and Heads of Departments), May 25, 1906, No. 5221-5223-C., enclosure to Lyon to Sec. to G.O.I., Home Dept., demi-official, Nov. 30, 1906, G.O.I., Home Establishments - Deposit, Dec. 1906, Progs. 6-9.

13. Minute by J. B. Fuller, May 25, 1906, E.B.&A., Appointments A, March 1908, Progs. 12-89.

14. Nawab Bahadur Khajeh Salimollah of Dacca, through the Collector and the Commissioner and the Govt. of E.B.&A., to the Secretary to the G.O.I., Home Dept., Home Public A, Dec. 1906, Progs. 266-309.

15. The Memorials are reproduced in G.O.I., Home Public A, Dec. 1906, Progs. 266-309.

16. Minute by P. C. Lyon, Chief Sec., Oct. 24, 1906, E.B.&A., Appointments A, March 1908, Progs. 12-89.

17. Draft Resolution, enclosure to Hare to Minto, demi-off., Oct. 31, 1906, G.O.I., Home Estab. Deposit, Dec. 1906, Progs. 6-9.

18. Minute by H. H. Risley, Home Sec., Dec. 5, 1906, *ibid.*

19. Minute by H. Adamson, Home Member, Dec. 6, 1906, *ibid.*

20. *Ibid.*

21. Minute by Minto, Dec. 13, 1906, G.O.I., Home Estab. Deposit, Dec. 1906, Progs. 6-9.

22. Minute by P. C. Lyon, Jan. 16, 1907, E.B.&A., Appointments A, Mar. 1908, Progs. 12-89.

23. G. I., Home Estab. A, May 1907, Prog. 103.

24. Minute by H. Adamson, Jan. 19, 1907, G.O.I., Home Estab. A, May 1907, Prog. 103.

25. E.B.&A., Appointments A, Mar. 1908, Progs. 12-89.

26. *Bande Mataram*, Feb. 21, 1907, *R.N.P.B.*

27. *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, Feb. 26, 1907, *R.N.P.B.*

28. Minute to P. C. Lyon by H. Sharp, Director of Public Instruction, Sept. 13, 1906, E.B.&A., Education A, July 1907, Progs. 1-62.

29. Minute by H. LeMesurier, Chief Sec., Jul. 30, 1907, E.B.&A., Education A, May 1908, Progs. 103-117.

30. E.B.&A., Education A, Jul. 1907, Progs. 1-62.

31. Minute by J. B. Fuller, Jan. 8, 1906, *ibid.*

32. Minute by H. L. Thomas, Apr. 21, 1906, and by J. B. Fuller, June 18, 1906, *ibid.*

33. Minute by H. Sharp, June 20, 1906, *ibid.*

34. Minute by H. Sharp, Aug. 28, 1906, and Sharp to Chief Sec., E.B.&A., no. 203, Apr. 4, 1907, *ibid.*

35. Minute by H. LeMesurier, Chief Sec., Jul. 30, 1907, E.B.&A., Education A, May 1908, Progs. 103-117.

36. *Ibid.*

37. R. Nathan, Commissioner of Dacca Division, to H. LeMesurier, Chief Sec., Sept. 24, 1907, E.B.&A., Education A, May 1908, Progs. 103-117. In the letter Nathan conveys his success in the negotiations with the trustees of Jagannath College and the terms of the agreement.

38. H. LeMesurier, Offg. Chief Sec., Govt. of E.B.&A., to Sec. to G.O.I., Home Dept., No. 348-E.T., Dec. 16, 1908 (confdl.), G.O.I., Education A, May 1909, Progs. 40-43.

39. H. LeMesurier, Offg. Chief Sec., Govt. of E.B.&A., to Sec. to G.O.I., Home Dept., No. 348-E.T., Dec. 16, 1908 (confdl.), G.O.I., Education A, May 1909, Progs. 40-43; E.B.&A., Education A, Sept. 1909, Progs. 38-42.

40. For a full discussion of the 1906-1907 riots and their causes see John R. McLane, "The 1905 Parition of Bengal and the New Communalism," *op. cit.*

41. P. C. Lyon, Chief Sec., Govt. of E.B.&A., to Sec. to G.O.I., No. 922-T., Feb. 15, 1908, G.O.I., Rev. and Agr. Dept., Land Rev. A, March 1908, Progs. 42-43.

42. G.O.I., Rev. and Agr. Dept., Land Rev. A, Nov. 1907, Progs. 50-55.

43. K. C. De, Registrar, Co-operative Credit Societies, E.B.&A., "Supplementary Note to the Report on the Working of Co-operative Cridit Societies in Eastern Bengal and Assam in 1906-1907," encl. to H. LeMesurier, Chief Sec., Govt. of E.B.&A., to Sec. to G.O.I., Home Dept., No. 614-C., Oct. 14, 1907, G.O.I., Home Political A, Dec. 1907, Progs. 57-63.

44. H. LeMesurier, Offg. Chief Sec. to Govt. of E.B.&A., to Sec. to G.O.I., Home Dept., No. 374-C., Aug. 17. 1907, Progs. 57-63.

45. P. C. Lyon, Chief Sec. to Govt. of E.B&A., to Sec. to G.O.I., No. 922-T., Feb. 15, 1908, G.O.I., Rev. and Agr. Dept., Land Rev. A, Mar. 1908, Progs. 42-43.

46. W. R. Gourlay, on Special Duty, "Report on the Indebtedness of the Agricultural Population of Mymensingh," Oct. 30, 1907 (submitted to the Collector of Mymensingh), encl. to P. C. Lyon to Sec. to G.O.I., Feb. 15, 1908, *op. cit.*

47. *Ibid.*

48. *Ibid.*

49. R. Nathan, Offg. Comm., Dacca Div., to Chief Sec., E.B.&A., No. 6-K., July, 1907, G.O.I., Home Political A, Dec. 1907, Progs. 57-63.

50. P. C. Lyon to Sec. to G.O.I., Feb. 15, 1908, *op. cit.*

51. Minute by R. W. Carlyle, Rev. and Agr. Sec., Nov. 11, 1909, G.O.I., Rev. and Agr. Dept., Land Rev. A, Dec. 1909, Progs. 5-7.

52. *Proceedings of the Legislative Council of Eastern Bengal and Assam*, Jan. 4, 1911, pp. 7-10.

53. E.B.&A., Appointments A, March 1908, Progs. 12-89.

54. Govt. of Bengal, Appointments A, Sept., 1917, Progs. 30-39.

55. G.O.I., Education A, June 1908, Progs. 31-35; Education B, May 1909, Progs. 59-70; Education A, Aug. 1909, Progs. 108-109.

56. E.B.&A., Education A, May 1908, Progs. 103-117; G.O.I., Education B, Aug. 1909, Progs. 32-36; G.O.I., Education A, June 1910, Progs. 154-159.

57. *Report on the Progress of Education in Eastern Bengal and Assam During the Years 1907-1908 to 1911-1912*, Vol. I, (Calcutta, 1913), 1-2, 26-34.

58. See Lord Hardinge's reply to an address from Bengali nationalist leaders in connection with the proposed establishment of a University at Dacca., Appendix II, G.O.I., Education A, April 1912, Prog. 111.

59. *Report on the Progress of Education in Eastern Bengal and Assam During the Years 1907-1908 to 1911-1912*, Vol. II, Appendix Table CCXXIX, p. 92.

60. In their despatch to the Secretary of State dated August 25, 1911, the Government of India declared that whatever "good work" had been accomplished in an administrative sense, those gains had "been in great measure counter balanced by the violent hostility which the Partition has aroused amongst the Bengalis." While the despatch held that opposition to the partition was more muted than earlier, it declared that "the resentment amongst the Bengalis in both Provinces of Bengal, who hold most of the land, fill the professions, and exercise a preponderating influence in public affairs," remained "as strong as ever." Despatch to Sec. of State (unnumbered), Aug. 25, 1911, G.O.I., Home Delhi A, Dec. 1911, Progs. 8-11.

61. The relationship between the partition and the pro-Muslim bias of the Eastern Bengal and Assam government and heightened Hindu-Muslim anatagonism has been clearly demonstrated by John R. McLane in his "The 1905 Partition of Bengal and the New Communalism," *op. cit.*

EAST BENGALI LANGUAGE AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT IN SOCIOLINGUISTIC PERSPECTIVE

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For nearly a decade now scholars of Bengal studies have gathered annually to look at some of the same socio-historical patterns and products from the vantage points of their own particular disciplines. The result each year is an impressive array of papers on specialized topics, most of which are of necessity limited in spacial and temporal scope and are marked, beginning with the very choice of topic, by the particular disciplinary focus of each scholar.

The favored approach to Bengal at these conferences has been an historical one; even very recent political events have normally been examined and analyzed in diachronic perspective, and analytic studies of literary and other creative works have typically been framed in history. This is not to ignore the occasional papers we have had from economists and sociologists in Bengal studies which have abstracted structures and processes in Bengal society for a point of time. But historical and semi-historical treatments have prevailed.

If there is a challenge to that emphasis on diachrony from this year's participant-scholars it comes from the panel on political economy and modernization. The topics for this panel reflect a main emphasis on point-in-time issues. In harmony with that emphasis, major portions of the following paper assume a synchronic view of the relationship between language and political development in East Bengal such as the sociolinguist might take, but a section on historical background is included for review and perspective.

The paper has in common with other presentations on this panel not only its predominantly synchronic approach, but its concern in part with political issues in the context of modernization and national development. At the same time it shares with papers from all the panels both its limited preoccupation with the cultural and geographical area of Bengal and its idiosyncracies as a paper written from a specialized disciplinary viewpoint. To stretch its usefulness somewhat, cross-cultural comparative material and suggested perspectives for other disciplines are included where possible.

The Sociolinguist's View

To begin with, we might ask what the specialist from another field with an interest in Bengal might learn of value from what the sociolinguist would see?

The non-sociolinguist would doubtless be aware of the overwhelming use of the Bengali language as mother-tongue and mode of communication in daily private and public affairs for seventy to eighty million East Bengalis. He would likewise be aware of its central role over the years as an issue which repeatedly spurred political movements. And he might well be aware of its special importance to the individual Bengali as an object of pride and love.

But from the sociolinguist he could learn about the changes which can be observed in the forms and uses of language which reflect an altered political situation or alterations in Bengalis' popular view of themselves in relation to the Pakistan idea, post-partition India, the west wing of Pakistan, religious traditions, and Bengali culture and language as a whole. From the sociolinguist he might also learn about planned language change, including the development of an eastern variant of Bengali after partition, as reflected in the conscious use of the language of writers and poets, about the standardization of terminologies for the needs of modernization and technical education, and about the official planning of priorities for the use of Bengali in education and public life.

The sociolinguist's field of vision may encompass supra-national groupings of peoples speaking the same or different languages, on a macro-sociolinguistic scale, it may focus on the speaker-to-speaker interchange at the micro-sociolinguistic level of inquiry, and it can range broadly between the two extremes.

He will be interested, on whatever scale, both in language itself, that is, variation in language form and structure, and in the uses of language in society, its role in human activity.

> How would the sociolinguist looking at East Bengal through a *macro* lens view the relation between language form and use and political development during the years from partition in 1947 to independence in 1971?

1. He would see a remarkably homogeneous language polity -- a province of some 75 million people, all but a few hundred thousand of whom spoke Benglai not only as their mother tongue, but exclusively, wothout knowledge of a second language. Taking into account the past political promotion of Urdu by West Pakistani leaders among Bengali speakers, the enduring use of British colonial English among the educated, the presence of an Urdu-speaking Bihari minority and pockets of Burmese and hill tribe language speakers, and the existing Bengali dialects spoken in Chittagong, Noakhali, Sylhet, and elsewhere, he would still find the language picture in East Bengal one of exceptional homogeneity. This fact he would not take for granted. Most of the rest of the world is characterized by complex patterns of language diversity, often within small geographical areas, and many of the world's people speak and use for some part of their daily activity at least one other language besides their mother tongue. This homogeneity of language in East Bengal would suggest to the sociolingusit various things about the potential for nationalist political movements, and various implications for the process of modernization.

2. He would see in Pakistan as a whole an artificially created polity comprised of historically disparate cultural, linguistic, and racial populations split by geography and linked by religion, and in East Pakistan, he might -- though we cannot say he would for sure -- see the potential for political and economic instability and recurrent nationalist stirrings. "Might," we say, because the sociolinguist has seen too many examples of linguistic polities that contradict his best predictions of what will obtain.

3. He would see in the prospects for economic development and modernization, including the spread of education, the advantages of linguistic homogeneity and the disadvantages of poor communications and transportation, a backward economy, and a largely uneducated population. Again, he would be cautious about drawing conclusions prematurely, in light of his knowledge of linguistically highly diverse nations whose solutions to the problems of national integration have been surprisingly smooth, and other linguistically homogeneous nations whose progress toward national integration has been halting and troubled.

4. He would see in the state of the Bengali language itself as spoken and used in East Bengal, and in the degree of attention paid it by policy-makers, its potential for successful use in education, government, administration and the media. For he would find a Bengali language with a long and respected literary tradition (shadhu), rich in lexical resources inherited from Sanskrit, Pali, Persian, and Arabic, in which a standardized modern colloquial variety (cholit) was used for both formal and informal purposes, and which had developed an extensive literature of its own over more than a century.

He would find that Bengali language development in East Pakistan since partition had been followed closely and in some cases shaped by Bengali language experts and that they had had a hand over the years in making policy recommendations to language planning authorities based, partly on the form the language was taking as an emerging eastern variant of Bengali, partly on usage as reflected in East Bengal modern literature, and partly on educational priorities and the need to adapt Bengali to them.

> How would the sociolinguist looking at East Bengal somewhere on a scale between extreme *macro* and extreme *micro* views see the relation between the forms and uses of the Bengali language and political development there?

To answer this it is helpful to know that the sociolinguist has a choice of possible approaches, independent of his specific topical interest. For example, he may start by looking at social stratification, social groupings, and social behavior in different settings for clues as to how language will vary in relation to these. Or he may listen for language variation first, and then watch for social correlates to the variants he hears. Or he may choose to look at both simultaneously, with the aim of discovering the relations between them.

Whichever of these three approaches he takes -- and that may depend on whether he sees himself as an anthropologist-sociologist or as a linguist -- he is looking for patterns of language behavior and social behavior which tell him how individuals view each other, and how they interact. And he is interested in how language structure, the use of language, and language change affect and are affected by social structure, social behavior, and social change.

In the context of political change, the sociolinguist's observations may be limited to the relations between language and specifically political behavior.

> The following are some examples of observable *linguistic variation* in the language of East Bengal for which the sociolinguist may look for socio-political correlates:

A. In phonology:

- Variation in the b/bh contrast. Variants are b, b', bh, w.
- Variation in the chh/ch contrast. Variants are chh, ch, ts.
- Phonological changes for style: humor, mimicry, other effect.
- Alternation in syllable stress, for example in careful speech in instructions or admonitions. In such cases the stress may shift from first to last syllable: *bolí; ammá.*
- Alternation between doubled and non-doubled consonants. For example: *porjɔnto∿porjjɔnto.*
- Variation in speed and elocution. For example the use of normal vs. slow, careful speech with foreigners.
- Imitation of other Bengali dialects.

B. In morphology:

- Alternation in choice of classifier. For example: *æ kṭa∿æ kkhana.*
- Alternation in use of case endings. For example: *amar∿amake.*
  kal∿kalke.
- Alternation in verb ending variants. For example: *-am ∿-um ∿ -em.*
- Choice of verb tense when possible forms overlap. For example: *korlam∿korechi∿korechilam.*

- Use of Dacca variants, as in the verb forms. For example:

STANDARD		DACCA
ami paini	∿	*ami pai nai*
ami ghumaini	∿	*ami ghumai nai*
tumi eshechhe	∿	*tumi eshchhe/ashchhe*

- Choice of shadhu or cholit forms according to social context.

- Reduplication, doubling, and compounding, including echo-compounding.

- Alternation between alternative adverbial postpositions. For example: *-kore* ∿ *-bhabe*.

C. In lexical choice:

- Variation in the use of independent fillers for hesitation, emphasis, etc. For example: *mane, to, iye, ar ki* (final).

- Variation in the use of dependent or subordinating markers. For example: *jæno, ki jæno* (medial), *naki* (medial), *chilo na?* (final, with sequitor).

- Variation in the use of interjections. For example: *arai/arei, ɔ̃a?, ai ai, hai hai, chi chi, ish, bapore bap*.

- Use of respectful forms. For example: *jihæ̃, jina*.

- Choice between shadhu and cholit words according to situation or stylistic considerations.

- Humorous or metaphorical uses of classifiers and other bound forms where they would not normally be used. For example: *æ kkhana gaṛi*

- Use of Bengali words to the exclusion of foreign borrowings in certain formal contexts. For example: in television and radio newscasts, in political speeches, in literary addresses to audiences, and above all on occasions devoted to the advancement of the Bengali language. In this last case, breach of the taboo against use of English words stirs open disapproval and even censure.

- Choice between English words and less current but known Bengali alternatives.

- Choice between a limited set of Hindu and Muslim variants. For example: *jɔl* ∿ *pani, mansho* ∿ *gosht, snan* ∿ *gɔsol*.

- Choice between free variants. For example: *bis ~ kuri, khabar ~ khana, nai ~ nei.*

- Use of alternative verb compounds for sound or visual effect. For example: *-uṭhiechhe, -poṛechhe, -phelechhe.* And *nie nao, die dao.*

D. In word order:

- Variation in the position of the verb in a sentence.

- Changes in word order for style. For example:

STANDARD	EMPHATIC
tora ke ke jabi?	*ke ke tora jabi?*

The following are some examples of recurring *speech situations* in which certain behavioral and speech patterns seem to hold for many speakers, which may have political overtones, and in which the sociolinguist may look for language variation:

A. Conversations in which colorful or humorous incidents from the past are told. For example, when old friends are together one relates the story of the disruption of a party in his university days. He tells how a group of Muslim students at Calcutta University in pre-partition days gathered for a party and were suddenly terrorized by a fellow Muslim student dressed as a Sikh and brandishing a knife. There is mirth for the listener in the situation, yet the joke desirves its meaning from the memory of a widespread fear among Muslims at the time that Sikhs were being hired to kill Muslims.

B. Spontaneous humor. For example humor about animals, or toward them, which can have deliberate political echoes: About crows: *Ei! Peyechhi. Na, thik achhe. Ar debena.* To a dog: *Ki bapar? Ki ki hobe? Ai ai.* About flies: *Aeto mach ratre keno? Oder ghum nei?*

C. Conversations between superiors and subordinates (as ricksha drivers or servants) where mutual respect prevails, initiated for the purpose of exchanging or acquiring information.

D. Conversations between individuals of comparable social position, for example between shopkeepers, or servants.

E. Conversations between Bengalis and foreigners who speak Bengali. Such conversations can flow freely for some time and then suddenly be blocked by an incongruous lapse into careful speech on the part of the Bengali, or a digression to instruct in some basic point of grammar such as the three forms in Bengali for English "you." An explanation of some elementary

grammatical point may be followed by an abrupt shift to complicated examples from the Chittagong dialect, and a resumption of fluent Bengali with the foreigner. Another kind of thing that can happen in conversations between Bengalis and foreigners in Bengali: a slowness on the native speaker's part to acknowledge that he understands a foreigner.

F. Political speeches and cultural addresses.

G. Newscasting on television and radio. Also television broadcast style compared to radio broadcast style. In Dacca at various periods the differences between the two have reflected degree of political freedom enjoyed by each, Radio Pakistan having been under stricter control than Dacca Television.

H. Cinema Bengali. Again, there have been not just topical but technical and stylistic differences in the use of language, between films, which have been recognized by the public as having political importance.

I. Use of religious expression or prayer, or the invoking of the name of Deity, in non-religious settings.

J. Structured or formalized humor in recurring metaphors, or jokes that belong to a repertory. For Bengalis there are the jokes about Punjabi *khabar*. There are snake and other animal metaphors used in connection with ethnic slurs. There is the making fun of fellow Bengalis' English (often in similarly and unconsciously fractured English). And there are formal jokes about speakers of the Noakhali and Sylhet dialects of Bengali, for example.

K. Observations people make about language itself. For example: "They speak fast in that district." Or: "The most beautiful Bengali is spoken in Nodiya and Shantipur."

> How would the sociolinguist looking at language in East Bengal through a *micro* lens see language variation in relation to political reality?

He might be interested in the speech registers of individual Bengalis. Registers are patterns of variation in speech which an individual has *within* the particular social or geographical dialects he speaks. He may have an indeterminate number, with gradients in between, for different situations demanding different degrees of formality, or occasioning varying ranges of emotion. A change of listener, place, or topic can cause the speaker to change registers.

Switching of registers for the Bengali can signal the switching of political context, either as a result of a change of his audience or setting, or as a result of a change in his attitude or commitment to what he is saying.

The kinds of linguistic variation a sociolinguist looks for in individual registers may include voice intensity, pitch level, intonation pattern,

enunciation, and phonetic and grammatical modification. Techniques for eliciting register switches may involve getting the speaker to shift from more careful or formal speech to less self-conscious, more casual speech. Techniques for eliciting reactions and judgments from listeners about registers may involve getting them to listen to taped samples of stories, encounters with children, political rallies, dramatic events, etc. Whatever his techniques, the sociolinguist engaged in *micro* study of language form and use in East Bengali political life can find definite changes in an individual's speech when that individual switches political roles and contexts.

To summarize, the sociolinguist interest in language and politics looks to see how language forms and language use reflect political realities and people's political concept of themselves. And he looks to see what directions language development takes under the influence of writers and through deliberate standardization, and how policy makers decide to use to which it is put in national life.

Background of Politics and Language in East Bengal

Having looked at some of the ways a sociolinguist can view language in socio-political context in East Bengal, we will now look back over the role of the Bengali language in East Bengal's political development from partition in 1947 to the late 1960's. This historical perspective is given at the risk of offending the expert who will find much of it familiar and all of it oversimplified.

East Bengal's brief political history as East Pakistan must be told with special attention to its cultural development, for the two go hand in hand. Between 1947 when it was carved out of formerly British India as the east wing of a new Muslim nation, and 1971 when it became an independent Bangladesh, linguistic and cultural factors played a critical role in its political developments. Some may assert that geographical factors -- the 1000 miles of distance between the two wings -- and economic and political imbalances grossly disfavoring the East which developed soon after partition and grew worse over the years, would alone have been enough to cause the ultimate disintegration of Pakistan.

No one can say to what degree differences in language, culture, and temperament contributed to the already growing awareness of distance and disparity, and how greatly the suppression of Bengali cultural activity by West Pakistan-based authorities affected the Bengalis' slow move toward nationhood. But the fact remains that the curtailment of cultural freedoms -- and in particular the denial of language rights to the Bengali people -- time and again were the dry tinder that kindled major political crises.

> More than one scholar has characterized East Bengal history as a political history of regionalism whose major contours can be mapped according to the degree to which regional expression was suppressed at any one period.

Mohammed Rashiduzzaman outlines four such periods:

(1) 1947-54: The period of Muslim League domination.

(2) 1954-58: Years during which a coalition of regional parties functioned.

(3) 1958-69: The Ayub era, when the central government dominated activity in both wings, and regional elites were frustrated.

(4) 1969-71: A period of mass movements, elections, crisis, and independence.

The position of the Bengali language in East Pakistan for 23 years roughly follows those political contours. To simplify further, one can speak of two major periods, as Rashiduzzaman and Shamsul Bari both suggest. The first begins before partition and extends until about 1952, though it starts to disintegrate in 1948. The second begins in 1952, although its firm beginnings date from 1956, and lasts through Bangladesh independence.

After 1956 the Bengali language figured as, and was recognized to be, the vehicle of Bengali culture. Before 1948, East Bengali culture and politics were wrapped up in the issues of Pakistani nationhood, for which the Urdu language was a symbol. Between 1948 and 1956 the two currents vied for primacy, and proponants of the Bengali language won.

More specifically, the chronology is as follows. Bengali was of course always the mother tongue of the Bengali people in undivided Bengal. After India gained her independence from the British, there was partition: two predominantly Muslim areas were carved out of north-western and eastern India to create the Islamic state of Pakistan, a homeland for the Muslims on the subcontinent. One result of this was that Bengal was cut in half, the western portion staying with India and the eastern portion becoming East Pakistan. Though Bengalis continued to speak Bengali as their mother tongue on both sides of the border, the leadership in East Bengal favored Urdu to be the official language of the province, as the East wing of Pakistan.

The reasons for this go back to the emergence in the late 1930's of the Muslim League as the voice of Muslim Bengalis. Bengali Muslim elites in the Muslim League were as much in favor of the promotion of the Urdu language as were Muslim elites from other areas of India in the League who, like Bengali Muslims, were pressing for a separate Islamic state. The Urdu language was seen as the vehicle of Islamic pride and cultural tradition. Accordingly, after partition in 1947, these Bengali Muslim elites supported the Muslim League in its push to make Urdu, spoken by just 3% of the people in both wings of Pakistan, the national language of Pakistan.

One may speculate how Bengali and non-Bengali Muslim leaders in Pakistan might both have recognized the importance of the Bengali language to Bengalis and used it to their joint advantage from the start. As it happens, they chose to ignore it and then, when that did not work, to battle it. Eventually, of course, they were defeated by it.

In 1948 Mohammed Ali Jinnah moved to impose Urdu as the state language on all of Pakistan. For all in the East wing but a small Bihari minority, Urdu was a foreign language. Lest we condemn the Muslim League leadership over hastily for their lack of wisdom, we must remind ourselves that there are instances in recent memory of nations choosing a minority language as a national language, in some cases to avoid a majority language which has had a divisive influence on national unity. Indonesia is an example. But the Muslim League suppressed the Bengali language at its peril. Several weeks before Jinnah came to Dacca to proclaim Urdu the state language of East Pakistan, a Bengali language Action Committee was formed to mount a drive to win over popular sentiment in favor of Bengali. By means of various arguments, including the warning to Bengalis that the use of Urdu as the official language would keep Bengalis out of government positions and insure domination of West Pakistanis over the East for a long time, the Committee sought to persuade the population that Urdu was an instrument that could be used against them, and that the use of Bengali in official life was their right.

The language issued emerged as a potent political force in 1952 when six students who were at the head of a large group demonstrating in front of Dacca University for the official recognition of the Bengali language went down in a hail of bullets. The date was the 21st of February and it later came to be observed by East Bengalis as Language Martyrs Day. The incident precipitated a broader popular struggle for language rights. But it was not until 1954 that the moderates of the Bengali Action Committee won out over the elites, and could point to popular acceptance of Bengali over Urdu. Victory came when the government authorized Bengali along with Urdu as a state language of Pakistan. This was written into the 1956 Pakistan constitution.

In subsequent years *Ekushe* (the 21st), as it is called, came to be much more than a commemoration of the deaths of the language martyrs. It was a yearly occasion for the veneration and admiration of all in Bengali language and culture that reflected the most noble qualities of being Bengali. One may say that it was a day for the celebration of Bengali identity, and thus it was natural that *Ekushe* should assume mounting importance as popular Bengali awareness of political realities in the East wing grew.

> The language movement of 1948-56 was only the beginning of a longer-term language movement which itself stands out as a major current in the 23 year political development of East Bengal.

After Bengali became a state language in the 1956 constitution, the language issue faded for awhile, but it reappeared during the Ayub era, when the regime's encouragement of efforts to Muslimize the Bengali language, and its suppression of certain kinds of literature, met with opposition from Bengali language moderates and student political groups working for regional rights. The Muslim League elites in East Bengal were still influential after 1954, and during the Ayub era many of the literati under their influence willingly or unwillingly served their aims and those of the regime. The Ayub government sought to rid the language of "impure" "Hindu" elements, and to "restore" and enrich it with Islamic infusions from the Arabic, Persian, and Urdu lexicons, and to control what Bengali literature was available in East Pakistan.

At the same time a generation of moderate Bengali writers and scholars was working for language freedom in the East, against the government's attempts to suppress the Bengali literature common to Bengalis on both sides of the border, including the works of Rabindranath Tagore, and its attempts to discredit the Muslim rebel poet Nazrul Islam, and to harrass writers. The Bengali moderates also opposed, on grounds of practicality and common sense, the government's position on the "purification" of the Bengali language.

Islamic elites and Muslim Bengali moderates were at odds on the issues of language purity, and language freedom. But on the general issue of the Muslimization of the Bengali language spoken in East Pakistan they were closer together. There was shared interest in the development of an East Bengali standard distinct from the colloquial standard of Calcutta, from which it was now artificially separated by the border. Such a new, Muslimized standard language would, it was hoped, generate its own literature and free itself from West Bengali dominating influence.

Thus it was not just the Islamic fanatics among the literati, those who sought to purify Muslim Bengali and to suppress what they saw as unhealthy "Hindu" and other literary influences, who supported the idea of an East Bengali Muslim standard. There were many Bengali language moderates who as Muslims were in favor of developing an eastern standard with its own literature. The difference was that the moderates called at the same time for literary freedom and open access to the writings of Tagor, Nazrul, and contemporary West Bengali writers. And on the issue of language purity they pointed out the difficulty, not to mention the pointlessness, of trying to purge a language with the mixed heritage of Bengali of certain of its elements, or of trying to isolate it or its literature from the influence of other neighboring varieties.

In their campaign for language freedom, the moderates were aided by the students, who used the language issue as another weapon in their struggle for regional political autonomy. In fact it was the students who were at the forefront of the Bengali vernacular movement. They aimed to replace English with Bengali in administration and education, so that Bengali-educated people would have greater job opportunities and the influence of the non-Bengali-speaking bureaucracy and those privileged few who knew English well would be reduced, thereby lessening the domination of the central government over the East wing. The students also asked for recognition of cultural separateness and cultural freedoms, in particular through the increased use of Bengali.

The vernacular movement helped raise popular political awareness of regional issues. From the beginning, language rights had been an important part of political platforms. In the Awami League's 21-point program for the 1954 elections, fully seven of the 21 points either directly or indirectly concerned language and cultural autonomy. Three were specifically language-related:

1 Bengali to be made one of the state languages.

#10 Educational system to be radically reformed, including education in the mother tongue.

#16 Burdwan House to be converted into a Bengali language research center.

The other four had to do with language issues or cultural or political rights:

9 Free, compulsory education to be introduced. Teacher pay and allowances to be provided.

#13 Black laws to be abolished; political prisoners to be released; press and assembly rights to be restored.

#17 Shahid Minar (a monument to the language martyrs) to be erected; families of the language martyrs to be compensated.

#19 February 21, *Ekushe*, which was Martyrs Day, to be a government holiday.

By 1965 regionalism was central to East Pakistan political platforms, and with wide popular acceptance of Sheik Mujibur Rahman's six-point program for provincial autonomy in 1966, the Muslimization of the language was no longer an issue. Rather, the increased use of the Bengali vernacular in its existing state was called for in government, higher education, and official life.

> Partly as a result of the political importance of the language issue, there were efforts which continue to the present by Bengali scholars and officials to expand and standardize the lexical resources of the language for its use in business, government operations and science education.

In their role as language specialists, scholars of the Bengali language have viewed the problems of language development and planning in East Bengal differently from the way they viewed it as writers. The language expert, whether he is a professor of literature or a civil servant in one of the official language planning agencies (the Bengali Academy, the Central Board for the Development of the Bengali Language, and the Textbook Board), sees

language development both as an outcome of usage by writers and as a product of planning by language institutions. The language used by West Bengali writers, that used by East Bengali creative writers, and that advocated by East Bengali scholars in recent years, have been three very different sets of stylistic and linguistic norms, as Munier Chowdhury showed in his book *Bengali Prose Style*. . .

Language planning experts may concern themselves not only with the development of terminologies and the setting of policies for the use of the vernacular, but with such matters as the standardization of broadcast language for radio and television. For example it is theoretically possible that a language expert would be consulted about the hiring of announcers whose speech would include the special markings, pronouns, and contractions of the variety of Bengali spoken in the east, differing from the Calcutta standard. And he would possibly be aware of pre-independence policy differences for Dacca television and Radio Pakistan Dacca, the latter having been more closely controlled by the central government.

Examples from the United States and England show how trends in broadcast policy can differ. In the U. S. in the early days, radio announcers' accents reflected their regional and social origins, but as the national networks became more important, radio announcers came to use a kind of standard called "network English." There was no official encouragement from government or educators, and the change came without much notice. Yet in England, where broadcasters on the BBC pioneered in the development, recognition, and spread of RP, "received pronunciation" or standard British English, it has become the case more and more nowadays that BBC announcers broadcast in the accents of their regional dialects.

Present-day language specialists in East Bengal, though they may not have been involved in deliberate attempts over the years to develop an East Bengali standard, have had to be aware of these efforts in order to advise planners. They know about early attempts to reform the language: to "purify" it of Hindu associations, simplify grammatical descriptions of it, and reform its orthography. They know of government campaigns in the past to counter the advocacy of a shared Hindu/Muslim Bengali cultural heritage - through extreme proposals such as the one to use the Arabic script for Muslim Bengali, and through actual attempts to develop an "Islamic" Bengali standard and a body of literature written in it. One such ideal standard was to have been based on the old Muslim puthi and the modern Dacca dialect, and was to have retained all Islmaic words, and purged itself of Sanskrit, Calcutta, Bengali, and Hindi influences.

The East Bengali standard that the specialist can now see evolving falls short of the ideal. Nevertheless as a compromise standardization of various East Bengali dialects and as a language spoken by the educated, it approximates an East Bengali standard.

To conclude this section on the background of language and politics in East Bengal, we may observe that even after Bangladesh independence in 1971, Bengali language and culture figured prominently in policy statements. In "An outline and manifesto of an independent sovereign republic and social

system," framers called for Bengali as the medium of instruction in educational institutions, and for its "improvement" through all possible efforts. The state, it said, must be neutral with respect to religion, but Bengali culture should be promoted, and creative literary endeavor encouraged, "so that the people can flower," and inasmuch as literature and culture "reflect the hopes and aspirations of struggling humanity."

The autonomy movement: December 1970 to March 1971

It is hoped the informed reader will not object to additional background review which will put what is yet to be said in perspective.

After the fall of Pakistan President Ayub Khan in 1969, his successor, General Yahya Khan, announced his intention to hold popular elections for the first time in Pakistan's history. Representatives elected to a National Assembly would then write a constitution for Pakistan. After years of repressive military rule and the failure of successive leaders to produce constitutional government in Pakistan, Bengalis were doubtful that elections would ultimately take place. Nine political parties campaigned in the two wings, however, and the elections were scheduled for late 1970.

A month before the elections were to be held a major cyclone in the Bay of Bengal swept a half million East Bengalis to their death and left an area of thousands of square miles destitute. The bitterness felt by Bengalis toward an indifferent, inefficient, and corrupt central government bureaucracy in the wake of the disaster may or may not have influenced the results of the elections in December. Whatever the effect, those elections produced in the Eastern province a single overwhelming result; 167 of the East's allottment of 169 seats in the National Assembly went to representatives of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's Awami League, the party which had advocated since 1966 a six-point program of provincial autonomy. The Awami League's 98% of the East wing seats constituted 53% of the national seats, making it the majority party for all of Pakistan, despite the fact that its constituency was almost entirely made up of East wing Bengalis.

In a climate of mixed hope and apprehension for Bengalis in January, Sheikh Mujib met first with Yahya Khan, and then with West Pakistani politician Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in Dacca. Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party had won the second largest bloc of National Assembly seats, 88, or 28% of the total, and Bhutto was calling himself the leader of "the other majority." The meetings were held to reach preliminary agreement on dates and procedures for framing the new constitution in the National Assembly. These meetings generated considerable popular concern and speculation. The Bengali landslide victory at the polls in December had touched off a wave of political fervor and the people were now impatient with what they suspected to be equivocation and delay on Bhutto's part.

In fact, the period between December 1970 and March 1971 in East Pakistan was critical, culturally and politically. During these four months, East Bengalis moved rapidly away from the idea of Pakistan to the idea of independent nationahood. The elections in December had awakened popular political consciousness. For the first time, East Bengalis had proof that their political and economic demands were legitimate: when given the chance they had spoken as one voice at the polls. There was now a legislative mandate for change. The startling unity of the East Bengali electorate, as reflected in the Awami League's sweeping election victory, and their instinctive recognition that winning in the democratic process put their demands on a legal basis, gave them new confidence. And so they were aware of the Janaury and February talks with Sheikh Mujib, and alert to the possibility of what they called a conspiracy to deprive them, as had been done in the past, of their newly won rights. And in the climate of hope and fear stirred up by the talks, their loyalty to the Pakistan idea see-sawed.

The crucial moment came in mid-February. Shortly after his return to West Pakistan from his talks with Mujib in Dacca, Bhutto announced -- on Monday, February 15 -- that he and his party would boycott the freshly re-scheduled sitting of the National Assembly. This date was also, ironically, the first day of Language Week, six days of assemblies, literary convocations, and cultural programs leading up to *Ekushe*, Language Martyrs Day, on Sunday, February 21.

During this week, deepening distrust of Bhutto, caused by his unexpected announcement and the indications of his collusion with Yahya Khan, combined with the high spirits that surrounded the annual observance of *Ekushe* to produce a wave of nationalist sentiment that swept away almost overnight any discernable lingering popular preference for accommodation with Pakistan. Suddenly it seemed that everyone was talking about *Bangla* (Bengal) and *shadhinoto* (independence) in the same breath, and no one was talking about Pakistan any more. As recently as January and early February, mention of Pakistan had not been unusual; with talks reportedly progressing between Sheikh Mujib and Yahya and Bhutto, and hope still alive for accommodation within a proposed framework of autonomy, talk of Pakistan -- of the type: "We are Pakistanis" -- could still be heard.

The larger period during which national sentiment crystallized was the 5-1/2 week period beginning February 15 and lasting through the brutal army crackdown March 25. But if one can pinpoint more narrowly the end of popular sentiment for the re-righting of injustices *within* a Pakistan federation, and the beginning of sentiment for national independence, that point in time was the week of Monday, February 15 to Sunday, February 21. This was the week, most close observers would say, that national loyalties quietly switched from Pakistan to a new Bangladesh. However, it was not until a week later that Sheikh Mujib called the strike that became a successful resistance, and when he did, still every succeeding step the Sheikh took was aimed at a solution to preserve national integrity and avoid secession.

Yahya announced on March 1 that he was postponing for a secont time, with no new date set, the sitting of the National Assembly that had been scheduled for March 3. People gathered angrily in the streets and marched, and the military reacted by firing on the crowds. Popular response to the postponement of the National Assembly, and the deaths of unarmed civilian demonstrators, provoked Sheikh Mujib to call a general strike.

At the end of the week, on Sunday, March 7, he made his famous speech at the Dacca Race Course before an estimated 900,000 listeners. In this speech, he defied speculation that he would call for independence, and choosing his words carefully, demanded an end to martial law, return of the army to its barracks, transfer of power to the elected representatives of both wings, and an inquiry into the army shootings. In this speech he launched the now famed "non-violent non-cooperation movement" in the East wing, as a result of which the province cut itself off from contact with West Pakistan and the rest of the world and moved in lone accord with the Sheikh's directives. New martial law orders from the central government, designed to test popular solidarity in the East, were ignored, in an unprecedented show of unity by the Bengali population.

One may argue that fear of Awami League reprisals motivated people to comply, that fear of the newly self-assured supporters of the Awami League in the East superceded the old fear of the military, but whatever people's motivations, their compliance with Awami League rather than central government martial law directives proved that the Awami League had de facto power.

All of this obscures the central fact that the military government, having seized control of Dacca airport and Chittagong harbor on March 1, wielded ultimate power and, in holding back, and allowing the movement to proceed, was making possible this demonstration of Awami League power and Bengali popular unity.

In fact, some have argued that the supreme mistake of the central government was to wait 3-1/2 weeks before its March 25th crackdown. For those 3-1/2 weeks gave the Bengalis the opportunity to discover that they could move in concert, and to taste the heady flavor of nationalism. But these 3-1/2 weeks also gave the military time to build up their arsenal and troop strength in the East. Soldiers were flown to Dacca on Pakistan international Airways Boeing 707's requisitioned by the government for the purpose. Because India had banned overflights by Pakistani aircraft several months before, the planes flew via Ceylon.

Meanwhile Yahya came to Dacca to talk with Sheikh Mujib again, and West Pakistani political leaders including Bhutto were called to join them. Some maintain that the talks were a sham from the start, in view of what followed on March 25, and since the only members of the bargaining team who brought detailed negotiating positions to the table were those on the Awami League side. Others suggest that the negotiations were begun in the hope that some agreement would emerge, with a simultaneous military build-up undertaken as a contingency measure, but that talks failed, and the army machine was then put into motion. In any event, the army struck suddenly in the night on Thursday, March 25, the very day that headlines predicted an announcement of a compromise.

After the army crackdown it was to be another nine months before Bangladesh independence was in fact achieved militarily, though it was declared on clandestine radio March 26, and confirmed in a proclamation on April 10 in a mango grove near the Indian border. Independence came with the surrender of the Pakistan army in Dacca December 17, 1971, after nine months of East Bengali guerrilla resistance crowned by final Indian army intervention.

What happened in the 3-1/2 weeks between Sheikh Mujib's call to strike March 1, and the Pakistan army crackdown March 25, to demonstrate popular unity and heighten nationalist sentiment certainly has parallels with previous nationalist and breakaway movements in history. But this does not detract from its interest to students of the social sciences, and students of recent Bengali history.

For one thing, the media -- television, radio, and the newspapers -- covered the movement as if suddenly freed from habitual constraints. The contrast was apparent, and remarked upon by Bengalis. For another, there was a proliferation of poems, songs, and comic dramas composed and performed during the movement in adulation of everything Bengali. Although no one has claimed that artistic activity during this period produced anything of enduring value -- on the whole, in fact, most of it was quite poor by anyone's standards -- there was a great stimulus to the activity itself. There was also a daily succession of meetings and processions, called by every conceivable interest group.

The channels of political expression were both verbal and non-verbal. The following are some examples of non-verbal manifestations of the movement:

1. A black flag of mourning for the "martyrs" -- demonstrators shot at the start of the movement -- flew in response to the Sheikh's directive from all houses, shops, public buildings, and vehicles.

2. The Bangladesh flag, designed by a group of students, appeared along with the black flag as the movement progressed, and was flown on student demand Tuesday, March 23.

3. Marching demonstrators often carried *lathi*, bamboo staves which were the traditional symbol of defiance by an unarmed populace during earlier political movements dating back before Indian independence. The term for such a march -- *lathi michil* -- was frequently heard. Torchlight marches at night were also common.

4. Black armbands or ribbons were worn by individuals for the same reason that the black flag was flown.

5. For meetings and processions, in particular, white clothing of a traditional type was worn: usually the rough spun white jama by men and a white sari, often with black border, by women. White may indicate mourning.

6. Likewise, demonstrators marched in bare feet. Bare feet are traditional on *Ekushe*.

7. Mechanical locomotion of any kind, including the use of rickshas, was banned on days when a strike (*hartal*) was called. Ambulances were the only exception.

8. Funds were set up to raise money for the families of martyrs. Contributing to such funds by individuals and businesses was expected as a demonstration of support to the Awami League, which also solicited and received large donations to its general coffers. Funds were also sought by some groups to build monuments to the martyrs.

9. The giving of blood at hospitals was another symbolic act in support of the movement. It was also a great boon to the hospitals, whose corridors were crowded with the overflow of wounded demonstrators.

10. Day and nighttime service by students and others on Awami League "peace-keeping committees" was an expression of support during the movement. These committees were created with the voiced purpose of safeguarding the lives and property of all, and in particular those who were most vulnerable to abuse in the feverish climate of Bengali nationalism, for example, members of the Bihari minority, especially successful merchants who were prey to looters.

Channels for verbal communication of the movement included the following:

1. There were public and special interest group meetings, with speakers. These included guilds, veterans' organizations, labor unions, businesses, and student groups.

2. The broadcast media disseminated news of the movement and, particularly in the case of Dacca Television, saturated its programming with Bengali nationalist cultural material, much of it composed during the movement.

   A significant sign of the changing character of broadcasting during the 3-1/2 weeks of March came the afternoon of Sunday, March 7. Radio Pakistan Dacca, whose Bengali employees had always been predictably loyal to the central government and were the butt of jokes because of this ("His Master's Voice"), was forced to close down when Bengali employees walked off the job after government superiors refused to permit transmission of the Sheikh's Race Course speech. The next morning, the government retreated and allowed a tape of the speech to be broadcast. Bengali employees walked back on.

3. The printed media, especially the daily newspapers, were filled with little else but news and commentary of the movement.

4. Pamphlets and handbills, distributed in the streets to passing motorists, or sold on corners, reflected the emotions and escalating demands of political factions. There was much evidence of a nationalism Sheikh Mujib would scarcely be able to keep in check much longer. (In his public pronouncements and his private negotiations, he was still parleying for the Awami League's rightful share within a united Pakistan, under a solution delivering broad autonomy to the East wing.)

5. Political processions themselves were a context for the shouting of verbal slogans.

6. Slogans with recurring symbolic terms appeared on posters, banners, and walls.

7. The increase in commercial use of Bengali, and incorporation of nationalist themes into advertising in the printed media, was striking. Commercial signs outside businesses, trade correspondence, and verbal interchange in transactions all reflected a sensitivity on the part of business leaders -- both Bengali and non-Bengali -- to the importance of identifying with the surge of Bengali nationalism.

8. The popular literature generated by the movement was one of the most obvious verbal evidences of its character. This included a steady flow of poetry, essays, plays, and even short novels, some of it appearing in existing literary magazines, some of it recited or performed on Dacca Television, and some of it published in supplements. And there were new songs. And budding artwork. And the beginnings of resistance cinema, though plans for films were shattered by the crackdown 3-1/2 weeks after the movement began.

Quite apart from its interest to the sociolinguist, the historian, and the political scientist, the crisis is an object-lesson for peace theoreticians. Those who study the nature of conflict -- how it originates, is aggravated rather than defused, deflected or re-channeled, and soon leads to open violence, can find in the Bangladesh crisis a classic model. For instance, the crisis can be taken as an example in which negotiations failed because of an incompatibility of goals initially, and a failure in the course of negotiations to find enough common ground for agreement. The failure to agree may have been due in part to vacillating or conflicting instructions from West Pakistani military leaders, which put into question whether there was a will on the West Pakistan side for agreement.

The crisis is also an example of prolonged violation of human rights -- what the political theoreticians call structural or institutional violence -- which led eventually to direct violence. The steps in this escalation are not difficult to see:

- There were unrectified political inequalities and economic disparities.

- At the same time the channels for redress and peaceful adjustment of disparities were inadequate or non-existent.

- The social conflict which resulted was repeatedly suppressed.

- Meanwhile there was a continuing lack of progress in redistributing power and wealth, that is, an absence of peaceful social change.

- Eventually, there was violent change.

The crisis indicates, too, how the very violation of human rights which causes eventual violence can itself escalate in the context of violence. This was vividly seen in the events which followed the March 25th Pakistan army crackdown. And for the practitioners of peace-keeping operations and the maintenance of peace, as defined in chapters VI and VII of the UN Charter, the crisis serves as an example of the wrong way to conduct "peace-keeping" operations. There was abundant evidence of counter-productive policies and methods at the outbreak of hostilities and during subsequent military occupation by the Pakistan army.

Observations of this kind are mostly incidental to a paper concerned with political linguistics. The reader may find them irrelevant, or even an outrage in the light of fundamental issues: the treachery of the crackdown itself, and the weight of the right -- won at the polls -- on the side of the East Bengalis.

Language and the Bengali Spring

The following and final section deals more specifically with the Bengali language in the context of the March 1971 non-cooperation movement. Observations are gathered under headings suggesting five key facts about language in Bengal:

I. East Bengal has unusual language homogeneity.

II. The Bengali language defines a Bengali as a Bengali, politically.

III. Language is the prime medium for political expression in East Bengal.

IV. The Bengali language is a conscious object of attention and a focus of pride for Bengalis.

V. Bengalis use their language as much for its own sake as for its function as the vehicle for specific messages.

I. East Bengal has unusual language homogeneity

In an earlier part of this paper, the point was made that a sociolinguist would find East Bengal's language homogeneity unusual when compared with much of the rest of the world. That is, nearly everyone in East Bengal speaks Bengali. The question arises whether this language homogeneity implies anything about nationalism movements, national survival, or the process of modernization.

A glance at some countries which came into being as a result of revolution (Soviet Russia, the U.S., France) or by gaining their independence from a colonial power (India, Indonesia, Mexico), or which have experienced a

serious challenge from nationalist movements (Pakistan, Nigeria, the Congo), or which have seen violence in trying for national integration (Vietnam, Northern Ireland, Malaysia), suggests no immediate unifromity in the relation of linguistic diversity or homogeneity to a polity's potential for successful nationalism movements.

Nor do various examples suggest any obvious implications of linguistic and cultural discontinuity for the survival of a nation. Survival must depend to a large degree on economic and political stability. Linguistically heterogeneous Switzerland and Ghana have survived for example, while Pakistan did not. Multilingual India and Israel also prosper, but monolingual 19th century Germany did not stay intact.

And clear implications of linguistic homogeneity for modernization and economic development are hard to derive. Countries which could be called relatively homogeneous such as Somalia, Chile, and Ireland have not necessarily been quicker to succeed economically, while countries with obvious language diversity such as Yugoslavia, Nigeria, China, the Soviet Union, and Switzerland have done well in the course of industrializing.

Nevertheless it remains true that students of Bengal political history over the years attached importance to East Bengal's linguistic homogeneity, citing it as a factor which always contributed to the potential for a successful nationalist movement, should political and economic conditions develop that would encourage it. And they have viewed linguistic and cultural, as well as geographical, discontinuity in Pakistan as a whole, from the beginning, as a reason to expect that that nation might not survive as originally conceived.

Whether linguistic homogeneity puts Bangladesh ahead more quickly in the staggering demands of reconstruction and development remains to be seen, and even later it may be hard to judge.

II. The Bengali language defines a Bengali as a Bengali, politically

In many parts of the world a man is defined politically by the country he is a citizen of, and he is as much a citizen of that country as is a fellow citizen who speaks another language. Many countries have nationals who speak a variety of languages despite their common citizenship. The political identity of Swiss, Yugoslavs, Israelis, Argentinians, Ivory Coast nationals, Philippinos, and Indians, for example, stems from national citizenship, regardless of the language an individual from one of these countries speaks. In such cases, nation is the larger unit encompassing several languages.

Any in many parts of the world, the man who is defined politically by the country he is a citizen of shares his language with the citizens of another country for whom the language is also native or official. Egyptians, Syrians, Lebanese, Jordanians, and Iraqis all speak Arabic. Spanish is spoken over most of Latin America as well as Spain. French, Italian, English,

Dutch, German and Swahili are a few of the more obvious examples of languages that are used beyond the borders of a single nation. In such cases, language is the larger unit embracing several nations.

Nation can mean at least two different things. It can be a body-politic or governmental unit existing as a political entity (Joshua Fishman's "nationism"), or it can be the continuity of a great tradition, resting in popular emotion (Fishman's "nationalism").

Even in cases where a man is politically defined, not by the country he is a citizen of, but rather by his nationality of origin or allegiance (nationality being used here in the sense of a great tradition), language may have little to do with his identity. There may not be a particular language associated with the nationality in question, or possibly a community of nationals no longer speak the language of the nationality but are still identified as nationals, or possibly they do speak the language but speaking it is not a necessary identifying factor.

In many parts of the world peoples who see themselves, and are seen by others, as distinct peoples, are defined as such on the basis of race, religion, geographical origin, surname, the cultural and social customs they follow, or perhaps legal assignment of nationality, and not necessarily on the basis of language. Language may be one defining characteristic which, whether it is still spoken or has disappeared, is not essential to the definition. This may be true to a greater or lesser extent of Armenians, Greeks, Parsis, Sikhs, Tibetans, eastern European gypsies, Sephardic Jews, and overseas Chinese. In such cases, nation and language may be loosely associated without being dependent on each other. But when language is a part of a great tradition, it may override allegiance to a political unit as a factor binding popular loyalty. This is what could be seen repeatedly in post-partition East Bengal.

The Bengali people are one of few peoples in the world who can be defined politically on the sole basis of language. That is to say, the fact that the Bengali speaks the Bengali language defines him politically as a Bengali, and distinguishes him from non-Bengali minorities, even when all other things may be roughly equal, for example physical appearance, cultural background, and customs in the home. And religion or national allegiance do not alter this identity. There are Hindu, Muslim, Christian, and Buddhist Bengalis. There are Bengalis living in India, Bangladesh, Pakistan all over East Africa and the South Pacific, as well as in England, Canada, and the U. S.

The Bengali in the state of West Bengal in India is the South Asian who speaks Bengali as his mother tongue, or as his first language. He is Bengali whether he is Hindu or Muslim. It is the same in East Bengal, once East Pakistan, now Bangladesh. The person who was born in East Bengal, who is Muslim like the majority of East Bengalis, and who lives like Bengalis, but who speaks Urdu is a "Bihari," not a Bengali. He may not necessarily be from the Indian state of Bihar. A "Bihari" is any South Asian non-Bengali in East Bengal; the term is used loosely to cover (West) Pakistanis living in East

Bengal, too, most of whom are also Muslim. And the Bengali living elsewhere in India or beyond the subcontinent, no matter what his religious background and adherence to local custom, and whatever his physical appearance, is Bengali if he speaks Bengali as his first language, even if his English is stronger as a result of education and profession. The point is, he does not speak as his first language Hindi or Urdu, or Punjabi, or Marathi, or another subcontinent language.

III. Language is the prime medium for political expression in East Bengal

Language is important as a political medium in East Bengal partly because it *can* be used that way in a country where nearly everyone speaks the same language, partly because of the importance of Bengali in defining a Bengali as such, politically, partly because of Bengalis' great love of and pride in their language, but also because as a vehicle of culture Bengali became symbolically important to its speakers when restrictions on its use were used as a club by the authorities.

The Bengali language really became a pivotal factor in political issues several years after partition. Before India's independence, political opposition was directed at the British. Immediately after partition and at various periods during the next 23 years, it was aimed at India. But when opposition began to be focussed on West Pakistan on account of political and economic imbalances and cultural injustices, the Bengali language became a symbol of Bengali separateness and the very medium for conveying this image.

East Bengali antagonism was increasingly directed not only toward West Pakistan (non-Bengali-speaking) Muslims in the West wing but also toward "Bihari" Urdu-speaking Muslims in East Bengal. Such antagonism as continued toward Bengali-speaking Hindus in India's West Bengal was rooted in pre-partition memories of Hindu political and economic domination based on religious and social differences. In the popular mind, language was not an issue. One might have expected Muslim East Bengalis, perhaps, to be eager to claim linguistic differences which would support their ideas of differentness from Hindu West Bengalis, but in general this kind of thinking was absent, and the language of both was seen as essentially the same.

Where language entered the picture was in East Bengalis' periodic efforts to push for an East Bengali style and the development of a body of East Bengali literature emphasizing Muslim themes, using Muslim vocabulary, and free from the dominating influence of West Bengali writers. Though there was widespread tolerance of Indian Bengal and an interest in having Hindu-Muslim shared culture and language acknowledged, the political movement for autonomy in the East wing of Pakistan was definitely a Muslim movement. The ten per cent of East Bengal's population which was Hindu was signally apolitical. Later accusations by West Pakistanis that the non-cooperation movement in the East wing was a separatist revolt incited by Indian agents and carried off by Hindus in East Pakistan had no basis in the political facts there.

Not only was Bengali political leadership and its massive political following patently Muslim, but Islamic customs were pointedly observed, Islamic symbols used, and Islamic prayer and the invoking of the name of Allah incorporated into political behavior in public forums. And individual Bengalis went to extraordinary lengths to avoid a false appearance of any influence from or even inadvertent contact with India or Indians.

The political importance of the Bengali language becomes clear when it is looked upon as an index of growing nationalist sentiment. Changes in its forms and uses reflected a changing political picture. When the Awami League emerged in 1969 as the spokesman for regional grievances after the anti-Ayub movement, the language took on new political symbols and slogans. *"Joi Bangla"* (Victory to Bengal) was the Awami League slogan. *"Bhoter age bhat chai"* (Food before vote) was the slogan of the militant pro-China leftists in NAP, the National Awami Party, which was against elections and in favor of secession at the time.

It is interesting that the phrase *joi Bangla* which after the December 1970 elections was already a household expression and became familiar to international journalists two months later during the non-cooperation movement, was awhile gaining acceptance. As late as early 1970 there was an editorial campaign in some papers which supported the government against the emergence of this phrase. It was considered suggestive of separatism and of Hindu sympathies. (This was also a period when writers in the papers were still forced to use the word "our" wherever they meant "Bengali.") But already in 1969 public meetings conducted in colloquial Bengali were becoming a major forum for explaining exploitation to Bengalis, and Bengali wall slogans, posters, and handbills were being used to raise political awareness.

Many of the most obvious verbal channels for expressing nationalist sentiment before and during the autonomy movement were well-worn channels of past political movements, including earlier student political activity in support of regionalism, which had been encouraged and directed by factions of the Awami League and by NAP after it split away from the Awami League. *Lathi michil* with shouting of slogans, public meetings, wall mottos and handbills were not new. Likewise certain forms of non-verbal ritual political behavior -- white traditional dress, barefeet, clenched fists -- were part of this heritage. In fact, much of this behavior and the channels for political expression dated back to pre-independence days in undivided India. Their reappearance, and growing frequency in early 1971, was evidence of the importance of the election results.

The Bengali spoken language as used in informal conversation, public political and other speeches, and the media, increasingly reflected nationalist concerns in its use of terms like Bangladesh and its references to political issues such as language rights and exploitation. And Bengali written languages used in newspapers, pamphlets, weeklies, and literary magazines reflected these developments. The language used by Sheikh Mujib in his public speeches was a colloquial variety which language experts dub *"jɔnogɔner bhasha,"* the people's language.

During the non-cooperation movement, Bengali names were substituted for English or other names of government institutions and buildings. President House became *President Bhawan*, Radio Pakistan became *Dhaka Betar Kendro*, Pakistan International Airlines became *Bangla Jatiyo Biman Paribahan Sangsthat*, and of course East Pakistan disappeared from usage and Bangladesh appeared. Transliterated Bengali words were increasingly used in English medium newspapers. Some had always been used, for example the Bengali numerical quantities *lakh* and *crore*, but *"President Bhawan"* and others began to appear. During the non-cooperation movement, foreign journalists were issued Bengali-medium black arm bands, labelled *"Shongrodik."* Changes in broadcast and newspaper advertising reflected popular nationist sentiment. Banks in the East wing owned by West Pakistanis were among those that rushed to advertise in Bengali, with Bangladesh map outlines and clenched fists included in printed layouts.

It had been a yearly custom on *Ekushe* to cover or replace all signs in English, Urdu, or a foreign language with the Bengali equivalent. These included, for example, "Telegraph Office," "Rocket Reservations" (the Rocket a tourist river steamer), "Lufthansa," "Swissair," "Dar-ul-kabab," and the Chinese characters for "Chungking Restaurant." What happened in 1971 was that the signs stayed covered after the 21st of February, with Bhutto's boycott, and throughout the March non-cooperation movement which followed. (They were quickly uncovered after the March 25th army crackdown.)

After the December 1970 elections, the terminology of the struggle emerged rapidly. Some of the terms are discussed in a later section.

IV. The Bengali language is a conscious object of attention and a focus of pride for Bengalis

The attitudes of Bengalis toward their spoken and written language are a matter of interest to the observer, if only because they are so strikingly apparent. It is not hard to see a connection between popular consciousness of language and the role of language in East Bengali politics.

The sociolinguist may raise questions about the validity of folk attitudes toward language. Bengalis love their language, and they say it is beautiful. Can beauty be weighed and compared? For example, the most beautiful or "best" Bengali is said to be spoken in Nodiya and Shantipur. Is the judgement of a majority of Bengali speakers the criterion for deciding this? Some Bengalis say that Calcutta Bengali is good Bengali. On what basis is this asserted, except perhaps by polling writers, opinion makers, and the moderately enlightened?

Bengalis are proud of their language, and they say it is rich. Is richness verifiable by measurement? Certainly the lexical resources of Bengali are measurably large and complex, and its literary history long and mixed. Is Bengali "richer" than many languages, then?

Bengalis insist on using their language in national life and say this is their right. To the sociolinguist it is noteworthy that a body of speakers of one language are so consciously committed to its use, while a body of speakers of another lnaguage, such as the Punjabis of (West) Pakistan, can be content to switch to another language (Urdu) for public purposes.

Sometimes folk evaluations of the relative importance of a language provide a kind of measurement. For example, the speakers of a language like Bengali or Urdu may measure its importance, richness, adaptability, or modern relevance according to how many literary works written in Western languages have been translated into it. A speaker of English would be less likely to measure the importance of English according to how many works in other languages had been translated into it (though possibly he would note how much English literature had been translated into other languages.) And a speaker of English might tend to measure another language's importance, e.g., Bengali, according to how much of its literature had been translated into English.

Folk judgements about language may not always be accurate. The author of this paper, who speaks only *cholit*, has been told by East Bengalis that she was speaking *shadhu bhasha*. Many people in northern India assume that the films in their theaters are in Hindi, and that films in West Pakistan are in Urdu, but actually most Indian Hindi films are in Urdu. Moreover the Urdu of Indian films is judged generally better than that of West Pakistani films. Whatever the validity of folk attitudes implying measurable differences, the attitudes themselves exist and may affect the uses language is put to.

West Bengalis refer to Hindi (East Bengalis to Urdu) as a bazaar language. But (West) Pakistani champions of Urdu call Bengali the bazaar language. East Bengalis speak of Punjabi as a kitchen language. But to Punjabis in (West) Pakistan Bengali is the kitchen language. Bengalis, both Hindu and Muslim, tend to disavow a close relation between Bengali and other South Asian languages (although they do acknowledge the relation). For example, Nepali is dismissed as being "like Hindi" (which of course is a bazaar language). In fact there are startling similarities between Nepali and Bengali, especially Muslim Bengali. Yet some Muslim Bengalis consider Nepali a "Hindu" language (and therefore perhaps closer to Hindi.)

The question arises whether Hindu Bengalis and Muslim Bengalis see each other's variety of Bengali as different -- whether communal dialects exist in the popular mind, and whether they exist in fact. In fact there are differences which show up mainly in vocabulary choices, with few syntactic or phonological differences. Many Hindu Bengalis dismiss such differences as exist between the two as insignificant. Some Muslim Bengalis seek out and emphasize the differences. But as a rule the differences are not an important issue. Much more prevalent is the tendency of Muslim Bengalis to stress the Muslim heritage that *all* Bengali speakers are heir to, and to deemphasize the language's Hindu roots.

For example, Muslim Bengalis like to stress origins of Bengali that are independent of, and older than, Sanskrit, dating from before the Pali kings. Sanskrit, they assert, was simply an influence coming in from the side later on. And they emphasize the major influences on the language of Persian and Arabic during the long period of Muslim rule in Bengal. Muslim Bengalis, perhaps

viewing all Bengali as essentially a Muslim language, will more often compare it, not to a hypothetical Hindu variety of Bengali, but to Hindi. This comes out even in attitudes toward the Bengali script, and standards of handwriting. One Bengali teacher instructed pupils to write larger and more rounded Bengali letters: , etc., not the flatter and tigher ones: looked "Hindi," was correct. The flatter, tighter style may have suggested to the teacher the handwriting of Hindu Bengalis, but more likely it looked to her like the Devnagri script used in writing Hindi (though Nagri and Bengali letters mostly do not resemble each other.) Whatever her mental image, she labelled the sub-standard letters "Hindi."

To sum up, there are contradictions between our expectations and the facts. We expect that Muslim East Bengalis and Hindu West Bengalis (ignoring for the moment the presence of Hindus in East Bengal and the Muslims in West Bengal) will point to important differences between the varieties of language they speak. We expect this particularly from the Muslim East Bengali who, recalling past political, economic, and socio-cultural tensions, may seek to make clear the differences between the two communities. But we find that in general, language seems to be immune to the popular tendency to seize upon elements of Muslim East Bengali culture as symbolic of important differences between Muslims and Hindus. The view that the Bengali language is *one* seems to survive, even in circles where a verbal climate of hyperbole prevails in which anything may be held up as an example of the distance between Hindus and Muslims.

Attitudes toward language differences and the facts of the differences, if they arise to contradict each other, must be complicated further by the important differences between East and West Bengalis independent of religion. We are now talking for example of those Bengalis whose *desh* is East Bengal, who are originally from East Bengal or whose parents are, and who regardless of the fact that they are Hindu and have been living in Calcutta or elsewhere in West Bengal since partition, see themselves as East Bengalis, observe East Bengali customs in the home, and have East Bengali traits in their speech. So it is perhaps just as well that popular pride in and love of a single Bengali language is shared with Bengalis across political or religious boundaries, and communal and geographical differences exist for the linguist to decipher.

V. Bengalis use their language as much for its own sake as for its function as the vehicle for specific messages

In popular East Bengali usage, available forms and words tend to be chosen for their power, beauty, or currency and not for the accuracy of definition they would provide. Often the truth value of a statement is sacrificed to the very experience of language use and its momentary emotional effect.

There is a theory that a people who have weapons will eventually use them. Can this theory be extended to language? If a people have the linguistic resources for a diverse communication of passions, can we expect to hear them use their language in its emotional fullness? Is hyperbole simply the active evidence of an available rich arsenal of emotive language? Or do the causes of emotional language use run deeper, having somehow to do with national character?

Are Nepalis "more sophisticated" than Bengalis because they do not belabor a point, or are Bengalis the more sophisticated because they find interesting linguistic resources with which to belabor the point? And when a superabundance of national emotion surfaces in times of crisis like the first week of March in 1971, is it possible that it is aggravated by repeated recourse to the readily available emotional metaphors in the language which indulge such emotion? The evidence suggests that this was true for East Bengalis during the autonomy movement and at other crisis periods, and it may well be true in West Bengali political life as well.

Whatever the causes of Bengalis' tendency to use language for its impact rather than its message-carrying function, and whatever the influences of this tendency in turn on the speakers of Bengali, the kind of language they choose for its impact warrants examination, not only because it recurs in usage and has political importance, but because, ironically, it seems to be a limited and overworked selection from the language, which leaves whole areas of the language's lexical resources unharnessed. What follows will be concerned with recurring topics, themes, symbols, and slogans during the autonomy movement.

Election symbols adopted by each party for easy recognition on the baliot, particularly for voters who could not read, became more than ballot symbols. The *nauka* (county boat) of the Awami League came to stand for provincial autonomy and eventually for nationalist yearnings. Though it was a visual and not a verbal symbol, it was used in some of the same prominent and repetitive ways as were emotive terms from the language.

The song *"Amɔr shonar Bɑŋla"* by Tagore was informally adopted as Bengalis' *desher gan* (national song or anthem), presumably because it was almost universally known and liked, although students of Bengali literature consider it to be not one of Tagore's better songs. It became a kind of political symbol itself during the movement. Sheikh Mujib demanded that it be played on Radio Pakistan Dacca as well as on Dacca Television.

Music spawned by the movement -- mostly songs with bastardized imitation western accompaniment -- used simple rhythmic devices and repetition to emphasize familiar symbolic terms in the lyrics such as *shɔngram cholbe* (the struggle will continue). When white-clad mixed choruses wearing black protest ribbons were filmed singing the music on Dacca Television, melodramatic sound effects produced with drums and choral repetition were punctuated visually by the camera's rhythmic flashing and zooming, so that for instance the camera zoomed into the chorus at an angle on each of three repetitions of the word *shɔngram*, and then similarly on three repeated *cholbe's*.

Slogans were simple, used reduplicative construction, and were frequently of a form that could be shouted by a speaker for popular response, for example:

"Tomar desh tomar desh" (Sheikh Mujib)

"Bɑŋladesh Bɑŋladesh" (people)

Some of the adult political behavior showed up in children's play. It was not unusual to see small tots marching with sticks on their shoulders shouting slogans. There is a touching story about a family in Dacca which was forced to

keep a very young child indoors for the entire nine months between the army crackdown and independence because of the danger to the family when the child, who did not understand the army occupation, continued to shout *"Joi Bangla."*

Recurring themes that were heard in public speeches included martyrdom, with its blood symbolism; injustice, exploitation, and the rights (*ɔdhikar*) of the people; conspiracy; the struggle (*shɔngram*); and the movement (*andolon*). These were used in the printed and broadcast media as well. A preliminary examination of the newspapers of the newspapers of the period yields restricted patterns of linguistic hoice in use of words and metaphors, and a limited body of thematic material drawn from the events covered during the movement.

The same themes used publicly were taken up in everyone's everyday speech. Sometimes individuals went beyond a preoccupation with blood and martyrdom, however, to indulge a fascination with dead bodies. This had been true during the weeks after the November cyclone (extending even to public news coverage of the disaster on television), and it was apparent after there were military killings.

The terms *shɔngram*, *ɔdhikar*, and *andolon* were common in mealtime conversations at home. The word *andolon*, though used vaguely to denote something which was going to happen which people could join, gradually became a symbol of something larger and less specific which was already happening. One housewife who repeatedly swore she and the Bengali people would join the *andolon* when it came to that, when pressed for a description of what it would be like and what her particular job would be, could not at first visualize anything concrete. It had not occurred to her to think of the details such an activity might involve. The word *andolon* was still merely symbolic. In fact she did not at first even understand the question, but repeatedly translated the word into English. Similarly, the struggle for emancipation would continue (*shɔngram cholbei*), but even the educated individual did not have a clear idea what this would entail. The words summed up the utterer's fervent feelings of commitment to a just cause. The mechanics of a struggle were left to the Awami League leadership to think about, should Bengalis be forced to resort to violence.

The following summaries of a sampling of poems and essays are included to provide examples of typical nationalist themes and nationalist symbolism.

In a collection of poems entitled *Rɔktakto Shurjo* (Bloody Sun) by Shri Nɔren Shɔorkar, a Hindu, written between 1959 and 1970:

Shɔhidaner Punno Shritite (In Sacred Memory of the Martyrs), Feb. 20, 1959. The poet imagines the blood of the martyrs in the rising red sun in the East. He offers homage to Bengali youth who sacrificed their lives: "The sons of Bengal have sacrificed their lives today to free the Bengalis. The great day *Ekushe* has come back, memories are fresh, and will live on eternally."

Biplobi Purbo Bangla (Revolutionary East Bengal), Feb. 24, 1969.

The poet summarizes political insugence in Bengal, historically, referring to incidents in the 1920's and 1930's during the British period to terrorist incidents before partition, and to the East Bengali state language movement. The terms *bidrohi* and *birangona* refer to the revolutionary tradition in Bengali memory. Reference is also made to two of the 1952 language martyrs, Barat and Shalam.

Koto Rakto Chai (How much more blood to you want?), Feb. 18, 1969.

The poet writes in the context of the anti-Ayub movement, using blood symbolism and referring to blood-sucking dogs (West Pakistanis). He suggests a confrontation between blood-givers and blood-takers in a Bengal grown red from the flow.

Janotar Michhil Thamibena (The march of the people will not stop), Feb. 4, 1969.

In this poem there is no blood symbolism. The poet compares the tide of the people with the flow of the great rivers *Padda* (Padma), *Jamuna*, *Shurma* (in Sylhet), and *Meghna* (Brahmaputra), which proceed on to the sea which calls them, and which nothing can stop. He also refers to the Sindh River in West Pakistan. He salutes the leaders of the movement for freedom, "selfless martyrs who embraced death." Again he visualizes a confrontation between the desirers and the deniers. *Mukti* (freedom) is an important term in nationalist literature, suggesting self-emancipation and self-restoration, and not just territorial independence.

Ayena Bhai, Krishok, Majur (Peasants and workers, brothers come and join), June 22, 1968).

The poet specifically chooses workers and peasants. In the back of his mind are current police actions against them. These are the people who won independence for the subcontinent from the British. And these are the people who have lost their food and clothes. The symbols *rakto* (blood) and *ognimashal* (torch) occur, in a metaphor about light against darkness.

Ekusher Shshapno (Dream of the twenty-first), April 18, 1969.

The poet dreams he is in a procession when he suddenly hears gunshots fired, sees crows flying from the trees, and looks to see two people falling to the ground. He wakes up, realizes he was sleeping, and remembers that it is the twenty-first of February.

Krishok Mora Rajpothe (We peasants on this street), March 16, 1969.

The poet writes against the background of the 1969 anti-Ayub movement. The peasants have left their *kaste* (sickles and *kodal* (hoes) to come to the capital. The word *langal* (plow) is also used metaphorically. The poet asks "Where do the peasants get their strength?" They can destroy or create. They create the golden crops in the fields on which we flourish. And now they have come out against repression.

Koiphiat (dao) Give us an explanation), January 22, 1970.

Again the poet writes of confrontation. He protests that whenever he tries to speak or write his own language, he is stopped, and branded different. The word *kɔlɔm* (pen) is used metaphorically. You people (West Pakistanis) are cheating us, exploiting us, he says. "When there is music and dance in my house, you call us heretic (a reference to Islamic orthodoxy which frowns on dancing). On the other hand there are naked dancers in your place. With these complaints how long shall we (Pakistanis in both wings) remain united?"

Shamne Chɔlo (March forward), January 22, 1970.

"Bengalis march forward," says the poet, "Do not be afraid; we are a brave nation." He refers to the language martyrs Bɔrkɔt and Shalam. He exhorts the Bengali to have courage and patience in order to reap the golden fruit of independence (*shshadhinota*).

Shəhider Gan (Martyrs' Song), Feb. 1970.

This is a song in homage to the language martyrs Shalam and Bɔrkɔt. Who, the poet asks, has really paid the price for the blood shed in Ph lgun (late February, early March)? We remember you, he sings, your blood (*rɔkto, khun*), your sacrifice (*boli*).

By contrast, the next collection of songs is purposely Muslim in tone, is written in rural terms, and borrows from an older style suggesting earlier *pūthi* literature. It is entitled *Jhənkar* (Sound), and is a tribute to Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, dated June 7, 1970. Muslim terms and phrases are used, and quotes from the Koran and Hadiz regarding justice are included. The theme is Muslim Bengali nationalism. Justification for the six points is sought in the need to implement the Pakistan Resolution of 1940, at which time Mujib formed an Islamic front, and traditional Islamic voices were heard. The writers ask the people not to be misled by Islamic propaganda. The sponsors are the Pakistan Awami Ulema Party, which seeks to mobilize the 2,700,000 ulema, or religious employees, in East Bengal.

In a political pamphlet *Shɔmajtɔntro, Kiɔebɔn Kæno?* (Socialism - what and why?), a leader of NAP Moscow, Muzaffur Ahmed, writing in Dacca in 1970, identifies East Pakistan's problems in Marxist terms, citing exploitation (*shoshɔn*) and class distinctions (*shɔrbohara*) between the bourgeousie and the proletariat. He also refers to the international politics and the opposition of the U. S. to a "progressive social order."

Nnæeshɔnal Aowami Parti Nnæp Ki Chai (What the National Awami Party, NAP, wants) is a 1970 election manifesto summarizing NAP Moscow's program. This includes the demand for the redressing of the grievances of workers and peasants, and a proposal, echoing that of the Awami League, for full regional autonomy (*purno ancholik shahitto shashɔn*). The latter is an important phrase used by

both parties which appeared as early as 1954, and was central to the 1969-70 election campaign. By early 1971, it was being converted by leftists into a demand for independence: *shshadhikar* meaning the individual's right to freedom, *shshadhinota* meaning political independence for the territorial region. In its manifesto, however, NAP echoes the Awami League also in its call for relegating only defense, foreign affairs, and currency to the central government, and all other responsibilities to the autonomous provinces. Interestingly, the manifesto also calls for the reconstitution of the provinces on the basis of language: Bengali, Sindhi, Pɔshtu, etc. The Awami League's six points (*chɔe dɔpha*) are also referred to.

The themes of regional autonomy (*shahitto shashɔn*), exploitation (*sh>shon*) and language rights (*bhashar shshadhikar*) are taken up in a volume of poems and essays entitled *Mɔhan Ekushe Shshɔrone* (In Memory of the Great Twenty-first) published February 5, 1970 by the East Pakistan Awami League Women's Organization. In an introduction, Sheikh Mujib writes that "the movement of the twenty-first of February created a chapter for itself." Again there are references to the blood of the martyrs Bɔrkɔt and Shalam, who "are like bright stars on the horizon of Bangladesh," and who "will not have gone in vain" on that "bloody twenty-first." Poinsettias (*krishochura*) or their petals (*papri*) are also used poetically as symbols of blood. The word *sphulingɔ* (spark), like other references to fire, is also used metaphorically. In an essay *Bɑŋla Bhasha Andolon o Amra* (The Bengali Language Movement and We the People), there is discussion of regional autonomy, the people (*jɔnota*) and society (*shɔmaj*), culture (*sh>nshkriti*), exploitation, and dictatorship (*shoirachar*).

A sampling of poetry published in 1972 after Bangladesh achieved her independence does not differ greatly from earlier poetry centering on nationalist themes, in its restricted choice of words and its heavy reliance on blood symbolism and images of death.

One collection is entitled *Shshɔjɔn harano shshɔshane* (In the graveyard where you have lost your relatives), dated February 21, 1972. Two poems summarize the past year's experience: "We have suffered; in nine months all we have heard is death news of friends and relatives and the sounds of automatic weapons: the sten gun (with its *kɔt kɔt shɔbdo*, the rat-a-tat sound), the rifle, and the LMG (light machine gun)." The old symbols are there: blood, sacrifice, the blood-red sun, blood dried in the streets, and blood flowing in the Ganges (*Burigɔŋga*) River. At the end of this struggle now, there is hope, the *dhaner shish* (sheaf containing grain). The poet sings "We are independent (*shshadhin*), free (*mukto*); we can live like human beings; this time we will have all our rights (*adhikar*). Because of our struggle (*shɔŋgram*), workers and peasants, all can be brothers. There are poems paying homage to the 1952 language martyrs, including specific references to Bɔrkɔt and Shalam, as pioneers in the final struggle which has brought independence. The years before independence are likened to a covering of mist (*kuasha ḍhaka*). There is a poem in praise of the beauty of the Bengali language and the greatness of its poets, and in tribute to the martyrdom of those who shed blood in 1952 so that Bengali might become the "national" (*rashthre*) language.

Shshadhinotar Shurjo (The Rising Sun of Independence), also published on February 21, 1972, is a collection of poems and songs which includes one written by Nazrul Islam in the late 1930's, *Rɔnoshɔngit* (Song of War), and also the seasonal spring song by Tagore, *Amor Shonar Banla*, which became the national anthem. The latter contains symbolism about mother Bengal which can be found in nationalist poetry, but students of Bengali literature have expressed surprise that a revolutionary song, perhaps one of Nazrul's, was not chosen for the national song. In this volume there are poems about persons accused in the Agɔrtɔla Conspiracy trial, who are now seen as pioneers in the struggle for independence. Earlier rebel heroes are also added to the growing national lore of independence: Khudi Ram of the 1920's, and Shurjo Shen, who led a Chittagong army raid in 1932, and for whom Dacca University's Jinnah Hall has now been re-named. (Iqbal Hall has also been renamed, after Sergeant Zɔrul Hɔq, who was killed while escaping from prison during the Agɔrtɔla case.) The term used in these poems for the freedom fighters is *mukti jɔddha*, which includes the Mukti Bahini and other Mukti guerrillas. (The term *mukti fauj*, which was used by Shubash Bosh during the Indian liberation movement in Bengal, was used for the Mukti early in the 1971 struggle before they came to be known as the Mukti Bahini.)

Again, in *Mritunjɔyi* (The Conqueror of Death), also published on February 21, 1972, the language martyrs are depicted as the forerunners of the independence movement: "The blood which you shed in 1952 did not go in vain." There is a reference to the Shɔhid Minar, monument to the language martyrs in Dacca which was destroyed on the night of March 25, 1971. In one poem citing the military crackdown, the last line is typical: *Ɔssro elo, rɔkto gæ lo, shshadhin holo* (Arms came, blood flowed, there was independence). In poems depicting events after the crackdown, the poet speaks of a blood-stained shirt, of blood stains in the street (*rɔkter rajpɔth*), and of dogs and crows feeding on dead bodies (*mritodeho, las*). "We will not forget" is in Dacca dialetc: *Bhuli nai, amra bhuli nai.* The poet pays tribute to the martyrs Abul, Rɔfiq, and Shɔfiq.

From what can be seen of the most heavily employed language of the movement in 1971, of its hastily composed music, of the language used in essays and poetry dating from the 1950's and 1960's, and of language found in literature for popular consumption since independence, it would seem that the richest stores of the Bengali language were not drawn upon during periods of political crisis. At least the best of East Bengal's creative talent in poetry and music did not emerge in popular nationalist literature and song. Perhaps the time during such periods was too short, and the feverish climate of nationalism stifled intricacy of thought and encouraged banality. Perhaps creative work of more enduring value was in progress underground, for example, during the nine months of struggle that followed the March 25th crackdown, and after independence.

But the observer may well ask if it is a circular effect that is governing the creative process when, in an atmosphere of excess public emotion, the expressive impulse constricts around a limited body of terms and phrases, and the use and overuse of these limited resources seems in turn to constrict the free soaring of the artist's spirit.

Conclusion

There is probably much that could be learned about nationalism and language from theoretical considerations of the nature of nationalist movements, and from comparison of East Bengal's political history with that of other countries.

What could nationalist typologies from the literature of political science tell us about nationalist language use? Is there something of interest in the examples of Indonesia, some of the African states, or for that matter India, for those interested in the Bengali language in the context of emerging Bangladesh.

May enlightenment be gained from studying revitalization movements in the anthropological literature? What parallels are there between East Bengal in 1971 and Israel, China, or the Prague Spring of 1968?

What do we already understand about revolution and its effects on language and the uses to which it is put politically, from reading revolutionary South American guerrilla literature, for example, or, in another vein, Boris Pasternak's *Dr. Zhivago*?

Even the wisdom of an animal behaviorist like Konrad Lorenz can be illuminating for densely populated East Bengal. He writes: "That crowding increases the propensity to aggressive behavior has long been known and demonstrated experimentally by sociological research." (*On Aggression*, p. 244) Does aggressive behavior affect language form and use?

In his book *The Symbolic Uses of Politics*, Murray Edelman calls the State an abstraction, in the name of which however much that is real is done to or for men. According to him the greater part of politics is lore, myth, emotion, and obsession. Political institutions take on strong meanings for the large masses of men who believe in them, thus making a social process possible and enabling the elites involved -- political leaders or whoever -- to function. Can this jibe with a cynical view of political process in East Bengal? The role of language in creating and sustaining myth and lore, and feeding emotion and obsession, must be crucial.

Whatever one's view of the importance of language to the beginnings, development, and outcome of the nationalist movement in East Bengal, one would have, after seeing what happened over the years there, to agree with Noam Chomsky (writing in his *American Power and the New Mandarins* about the failure of chroniclers of the Spanish Civil War to credit anarchist uprisings), that there can be and sometimes is spontaneous political activity that is successful.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author is indebted to Mohammed Rashiduzzaman of the Southern Asian Institute, Columbia University, Pabitra Sarkar of the Center for South Asian Studies, University of Chicago, and Shamsul Bari of the Department of South Asian Languages, University of Minnesota for the substance of important parts of this paper, and for their authority in subject areas in which the author was ignorant, and for their selfless giving of time. Credit is also due Professor Munier Chowdhury, Monsur Musa, Jahanara Imam, Ranu Basu, and a number of others for helpful insights. Assertions inadequately supported in this paper which the author makes based on her own perceptions and experience in East Bengal in 1970-71 are her own responsibility.

ADMINISTRATIVE CULTURE IN BANGLADESH

This paper endeavours to identify the changing patterns of relationship between administration (e.g. bureaucracy) and its political environment and their future implications for institution-building and development in Bangladesh. This effort at prediction defines only broad features and deals with only probabilities which at best can turn into sound predictions and at worst will be shown to have been wild guesses.

The major trend noted in this paper is that, generally speaking, administration (its values, patterns, leaders) dominated its political environment from the beginning of the British days until the emergence of Bangladesh. Now there are strong indications that politics, especially the political party and interest groups, is likely to control the administration. The dominant approach followed in the British days, and later in the Pakistani era, to the problems of order and development was administrative.[1] The approach that is likely to be crucial in the nation-building of Bangladesh will increasingly become political.

Assuming this is an appropriate way of viewing current changes, the paper examines its implications for institution-building and development and finds potential conflict, firstly, between democratic aspirations and partisan institution-building and, secondly, between ideology and technocracy.

Theoretical position.

There exists a wealth of literature dealing with the inter-relationship between administration, especially bureaucracy, and its political environment.[2] Three positions can be identified. First, the instrumental approach which suggests that administration, being the more developed sector by comparison with politics, can become an instrument or agent for change through "radiation" and diffusion of values and through direct changes in institutional structures or institutional practices. This is in line with the argument of many economists that the modern sector of the economy can become a vehicle for overall economic development. Proceeding from the reality of administrative dominance in many developing countries the instrumentalist position prescribes that modernizing values, techniques and resources should be poured, mainly through technical assistance, into administrative sectors so that it can allocate and diffuse them into the various sectors of society.

The second position recognizes the reality of administrative dominance in many new countries but suggests that it cannot become the dominant agent of modernization. For proper development the political environment must be made at least as developed, if not more, in terms of organization, skills, leadership, as the administrative sector. The prescriptive aspect of this position is to encourage the growth of formal political institutions, interest groups and political parties.

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* This is adapted from a paper presented at the Ninth Annual Conference of Bengal Studies held between 28 - 30 April 1973. The author acknowledges with gratitude the comments of several experts, especially Professor Howard Wriggins of Columbia University.

The last position maintains an electric approach and generally avoids commitment for purpose of modernization to any specific pattern of relationship between administration and its political environment. The difficulty with these theoretical discussions are, first, there is not enough empirical data available to validate the positions; second, modernizing processes themselves have so far shown many variations in this relationship; third, the analytic and prescriptive contents of these positions are sometimes influenced, not by objective data but by strategic considerations of what is feasible under foreign aid and technical assistance programmes, and lastly development and modernization do not have any commonly-agreed meanings.

Administration and Its Ecology in East Pakistan

Generally, observers tend to agree that in Pakistan's brief history, administration and bureaucracy had more influence than politics and politicians in the overall running of the country. Not only in the internal management of its systems, procedures and relationships, but also in the decisions involving basic political, economic and social issues, the bureaucracy in association with the military played a decisive role. Many senior bureaucrats moved into key ruling positions before Ayub imposed the first Martial Law. During the Ayub era it was again the bureaucrats who played the major role in the national decision-making process. Things did not change much during Yahaya's regime, although the military leaders had allegedly set the outer limits of the influence that bureaucrats and other groups could exercise in the national system. The administration of the countryside for the whole period of Pakistan's existence has been in sole custody of bureaucrats, though some efforts were made through the Basic Democracies system to give local leaders greater responsibility than they had had before.[3]

Let us now identify the major instruments and institutions through which the administrative sector was able to exercise its dominant position. Put negatively, the political environment remained poorly organized. The ruling political party did not have sufficient organization, skills and resources to provide a reasonable base for exercising effective control over the bureaucracy. Interest groups in the society were not organized to any degree. The dominant ruling model was the vice-regal system and the experience of political governance of society was insignificant. Positively speaking, the administration maintained its basic colonial features -- hierarchy of services, limited and strict entry points for each service, elite-character of superior services with the Civil Service of Pakistan being the super-elite. The structure of services provided the basic parameters for mobility, communication, and control functions within the system and for negotiation, bargaining and adjustment with external groups outside the system. The control by the super-elite cadre was maintained by, first, the monopoly occupancy of all key administrative positions by its members and, second, by claiming for its members a major involvement in the new development institutions. Thus, the CSP secured 60% representation in the Economic Pool, held key positions in the Planning Commission, and claimed a major share of the Chairmanships and directorships of new public enterprises. The members of the bureaucracy obtained the lion's share of facilities, often given through foreign aid, to develop necessary skills, both within and outside the country, so that they could do their new jobs well without depending on expertise from such outside agencies as the universities.

While noting that bureaucratic dominance persisted in Pakistan, we must also admit that it did not work unopposed. Opposition came from several sources - politicians, professionals, especially doctors, engineers and teachers, and lastly students. Several instances of such opposition are well-documented. One of the major demands of the 1969 movement was the reorganization of administration, especially changing the ruling orientation of senior civilians, reducing the overall power of bureaucracy and developing less class-oriented and more people-oriented services.

Changes in Administration and Its Political Environment in Bangladesh.

The changes that have occurred and are being contemplated can be arranged into two categories -- internal (within the Administration itself) and external (in its political environment). Among significant internal changes one can note discontinuation of cadre identity, abolition of monopoly control by the super-elite cadre on key administrative positions, inclusion of outside professionals in key development agencies (e.g. Planning Commission), reduced constitutional guarantee of service conditions, and the possibility of radical reorganization of services. Major external changes appear to be the growth of one near-monopoly political party, the gradual development of party-affiliated organizations of key interest groups (e.g. students, youth, labour, etc.), and the likely emergence of directly elected local government bodies. All these changes may have a considerable impact on the way government priorities are defined and necessary policies and programmes are planned and emplemented.

Public officials in Bangladesh no longer use cadre affiliations nor are the reservations of posts strictly adhered to in the appointment for specific jobs. True, many members of the former CSP are now in top positions. This happened mainly because they are among the very few trained administrators the country has now. It is also true, however, that more members of the Provincial Civil Service are now in key secretariat and district positions than they had been in the days of one Pakistan. In addition, many important administrative positions are held by people who were not civil servants in the first place, but who participated in organizing the Bangladesh Government in exile during the liberation struggle. The Service Reorganization Commission examined the various issues connected with governmental organization and their recommendations were submitted to the Government. The recommendations of the Pay and Service Commission have already been accepted by the Government and the implementation of converting as many as existing 2208 pay scales into 10 pay scales within the limits of Takka 130 to 2000 is in progress.[4]

The organization of the Bangladesh Planning Commission shows some interesting features. It is headed by three economists, none of whom is a career civil servant, all three having been university teachers trained abroad. The organization of the Commission is much more elaborate than its Pakistani predecessor, with ten divisions and each division having functional links and control over two or three executive ministries. In each of these divisions there is a Chief, Deputy Chiefs, Assistant Chiefs, Research Officers and almost all of these positions are now filled by foreign-trained specialists drawn from university faculties, autonomous bodies and fresh university graduates, rather than from the

career services. It is assumed that the major burden of planning, allocation of resources, monitoring and evaluation of programmes will be done by the Planning Commission where there is now only one member of the Civil Service in a senior position.[5] It is very likely that inclusion of non-cadre professionals in senior positions of other administrative organizations (especially research agencies) will also take place in the future.[6]

A comparative study of the provisions of 1956, 1962 and 1972 constitutions on public services will show that public servants in Bangladesh may not have the same constitutional protection as their Pakistani predecessors. In all three constitutions there are provisions that "appointment and conditions of service are to be regulated by law"; public servants "shall hold office during the pleasure of the President"; that they "shall not be dismissed or removed from service or reduced in rank by an authority subordinate to that which they were appointed"; that action in such cases will not be taken until they "have been given a reasonable opportunity of showing cause against the action proposed to be taken" unless the action is taken "on grounds of conviction on a criminal charge or the dismissing authority is satisfied that for reasons recorded by him, it is not practicable to give that person an opportunity of showing cause or the President decides it not expedient for reason of state security to give that person such an opportunity." While in the constitutions of 1956 and 1962 nothing is mentioned about the finality of decisions by the dismissing authority regarding not giving the affected person "an opportunity of showing cause," the 1972 constitution maintains that such decisions of "the authority empowered to dismiss, remove such person or to reduce him in rank shall be final."

Another major difference is the incorporation in the 1956 and 1962 constitutions and the omission in the 1972 constitution of the criteria or principles of making rules for regulating the recruitment and conditions of service. The 1956 and 1962 constitutions require the rule-making authority (legislative or executive) to see that rules so framed shall "not be inconsistent or to secure (a) tenure and conditions of service shall not be varied to his disadvantage (b) every person shall have at least one appeal against any order which (i) punishes or censures him (ii) alters or interprets to his disadvantage any condition (iii) terminates his employment before he reaches superannuation age, provided if it is the order of the President or Governor, then there will be no right of appeal but a review of the order." No such procedural protection insulates the Public Service cadres from direct political decision in the 1972 constitution.

Of the major external changes, the one with the most decisive influence on the administrative sector is the emergence of the Awami League[8] as the monopoly political party, with overwhelming mass support. Despite inflation, alleged mismanagement of relief programmes and charges of corruption and nepotism, the party did maintain its 1970 electoral success (167 out of 169) in the 1972 election (291 out of 300).[9] Despite rumours to the contrary, the party did not experience any major break in the crucial test of selecting its nominees (297 from about 2100 applicants). Only about 40 Awami League members contested as independents, defying party decision and they were all expelled from the party.[10] In terms of governing skills, the Awami League leaders must have gained useful experience in the last 14 months. Not only in the area of

central politics but also in the sphere of district and village administration, the Awami League leaders have had direct responsible experience, especially in handling relief, reconstruction and development activities.[11] It is not certain but it seems likely that the "skill" level of the Awami League's elected members may be quite varied and rich, especially with the addition of about one-third new members in the new Parliament.[12] The internal mechanism and politics of the party are kept within control, despite the possibility of rupture over the issue of the Presidentship and appointment of a new General Secretary.[13]

Inside the Government, there are indications that the party is trying to establish its control on a solid footing. The Office of the Prime Minister is becoming increasingly powerful, with considerable influence coming from political groups within the party and other interested groups. A new Militia called *Rakhi Bahini* has been organized under the direction of the Prime Minister"s office to provide support to police or the Bangladesh Rifles in meeting serious breaches of order. This complex is mostly composed of pro-Mujib guerrillas and is likely to be used in dealing with disturbances of a political nature.

Another significant change in the political environment of administration is the conscious and vigorous development of party-oriented interest groups, particularly students, labour and youth. Pro-Awami League groups among students (Bangladesh Student League), labour (Jatio Sramik League), and youth (Awami Jubo League) seem well-organized and are developing a pattern of relationship with the party in which these organizations canvass and mobilize support for the party, provide inputs for policy and programme development. In return, their leaders are rewarded by the Party through the offer of nominations at the election or other political rewards.[14]

Another change of significant import for administration is the strong possibility that elected local government bodies will be established in an effort to reduce or possibly dispense with the centuries-old bureaucratic control over district and village administration. The Awami League leaders were always committed to a more democratic form of local government than was possible under the Basic Democracties System or its predecessor.[15] Now a strong political justification was added to establish such a system, the need to create avenues for local party leaders to participate in the sharing of power. After the party selected 297 candidates out of about 2100 applicants for contesting the national elections, party sources announced that those who did not get nominated would have an opportunity to contest elections for the proposed positions of "District Governor" and "Thana Administrators" to be created under the local government reform.[16]

Trends of Change and Their Implications.

We can look at the possible implications of the likely changes noted in the preceding pages and also examine the issues involved. The political ideal and pattern of the Awami League, as seen in the preceding year's operation and the recent election, appear to be the continuation of broad-based unity achieved during 1970 on the autonomy issue as embodied in the Awami League's Six Points

programme and expounded by Sheikh Mujib. Although divisions among interest groups (students, labour, etc.) were revived after liberation and in some cases were further sharpened (e.g. division of the Student League and the emergence of the Rob-Siraj group and the establishment of a new party titled Jatio Samajtantrik Dal), the Awami League is trying to preserve its "umbrella" character in order to accommodate claims from various groups and leaders with divergent viewpoints. So far, the objectives and programmes of the party were expressed in broadest possible terms. Before liberation it was autonomy and now it is Mujibbad based on four pillars - nationalism, socialism, secularism and democracy. Many Awami League leaders stated during their campaign speeches that the 1973 election would be a referendum on Mujibbad, just as Mujib himself had described the 1970 election as a referendum on the Six Points Programme. By formulating such a broad framework of objectives, which can in fact include almost countless options, the Awami League retains considerable flexibility in selecting policies and programmes which may not always be mutually consistent and compatible.

Since the ideological framework of the Awami League is more designed to accommodate divergent groups than to provide specific guidelines for policy development, two things are likely to happen. First, the party is not likely to have strong attachments to any particular policy objectives or set of values, so long as it can afford not to do so. The Ayub regime, by contrast, could be characterized by its strong commitment to order and economic growth and many would argue that it did not pay sufficient attention to economic justice and national unity. The present Bangladesh Government, on the other hand, is not likely to give indications of its attachment or rejection of any values. It is more likely to follow an eclectic policy of continually trying to strike some form of tolerable harmony among these contrasting and sometimes conflicting goals (order, growth, distribution, participation, identity). Second, the policies and programmes of the government are not likely to be drawn mostly from logical necessity or from a leader's specific policy goals and ideas, as was the case with Ayub. The party and its key leaders appear to be pragmatists, with considerable experience in practical politics, and it is very likely that they would allow the policies and programmes to evolve through interaction of various forces at work without either trying to intervene too much or to push too strongly. In such a framework of governance, the administration or bureaucracy will be one factor only, maybe a major factor now; but given continued operation of this framework, the predominant position of administration will gradually pass to the forces of its political environment, such as political party and other interest groups.

Another important trend of the Awami League's ruling pattern is the gradual strengthening of the political approach and political infrastructure in the process of day-to-day governance. The Sheikh's top policy advisors are mostly non-bureaucrats (Tofail, Sheikh Moni, Gazi Mustafa, etc.). This is quite different from the practice followed by Ayub, who drew key advisors from the Civil Service. Those who accompany the Sheikh and his ministers in public apearances, visits and on tours are mostly from his political party and party-affiliated interest groups.

A difficult dilemma results from the overshelming electoral victory. Having a nearly complete monopoly in the National Assembly, the Awami League must either allow freedom to its members to discuss, debate and formulate

policies within the Assembly, thus running the risk of disintegrating the party, or to do the major part of policy deliberation, ironing out differences and developing an agreed policy within the party, derogating Parliament merely to the role of legitimizing what the party has already approved.[17] Evidence drawn from party behaviour in the Constituent Assembly of 1972, and present party activities strongly suggest they are moving in the latter direction.

Thus, the party is likely to receive more emphasis in the future in terms or reorganization, acquisition of needed skills, formation of Committees and cells so that it can perform all the key activities of what the National Assembly is supposed to do. There are indications that patterns of communication and movement between the party and its affiliates are gradually being developed on a sounder footing. Through reorganization of local government systems, the party may not only dismantle the citadel of bureaucratic control but provide the basis for a long-needed local infrastructure for a viable political system. With increasing party influence on the decision-making process, growing opportunity for interest-groups to exert influence on policies, the absence of the need in Bangladesh for the bureaucracy to provide a national focus since religious, ethnic and cultural differences are limited in Bangladesh,[18] the likelihood that the influence of elected officials in local administration will grow -- all these factors combine to make it very likely that the administration sector or the bureaucracy will loose much of its earlier power and glamour and foundations for a genuine political approach will be laid.

It is also likely that administration will experience significant internal changes -- changes that have been demanded for the last fifty years but have not yet been adopted. The constitutional protection guaranteeing security of tenure of service will be lessened in an effort to encourage innovation, harder work, and greater conformity to party interests. The structuring of the services is likely to be less archaic and elite-oriented, with fewer cadres, less pay differentials, and more scope for mobility within and between services.[19] The demand for making the public services more people-oriented and reducing their differentials in privileges and benefits now have widespread and influential sources of support. It is very likely that a substantial amount of decentralization in administration will take place -- possibly spurred by increasing demands from local party leaders for effective voice in local decision-making.[20] The twin needs of retaining within the party leadership of various pressure groups and the increasing use of a political approach to the solution of various problems will create a situation where the system has to provide more avenues for meaningful work (or jobs) by non-bureaucratic groups. It is my hunch that not only new programmes and additional positions will be instituted to provide openings for non-bureaucrats but also some of the existing positions, where only members of the Civil Services could now be employed may possibly be declassified so that outsiders, mostly party sympathizers, could be appointed.[21]

While predicting strong possibilities of the reversal of positions in the relationship between administration and its political environment in the near future, I am not suggesting that this will be a smooth process. The Bangladesh bureaucracy still has powerful cards (skill, service links, middle class background, and above all a past record) to play. And no vested interest groups have surrendered their power without a fight -- overt or covert. But my prediction is based on three crucial factors -- the political orientation of existing leaders, the gradual strengthening of the party apparatus with its

increasing link with the "grass roots," and the establishment of party affiliated organizations among various key pressure groups. The pressures for retaining administrative predominance in the national life of Bangladesh are likely to be outweighted by the counter pressures emanating from within the party and other organized groups. Even the pressure that bureaucracy can mount may not be all that consolidated. I am strongly inclined to argue that divisions within the bureaucracy and among its likely supporters (outside professionals and army) are likely to emerge sooner or later; these divisions will be along party lines leading to the extension, either formally or on an informal basis, of party-affiliated associations in these sectors.

Two Major Issues.

In concluding this futuristic analysis of identifying in the relationship between administration and its political environment, the major trends and their implications, I would like to mention two issues which appear to be important. First, history shows that the successful working of parliamentary requires neutral and autonomous socio-political institutions. The Bangladesh rulers state their commitment to the ideals of democracy. One may see a trend of institution-building pattern that many communist countries have followed.[22] A free Press, neutral bureaucracy, autonomous interest-groups, and an open deliberating forum (Parliament or Congress), are not likely to develop despite their legal and ideological framework. These institutions are being developed but not on an autonomous or neutral level but strongly along party lines as they exist in Soviet Russia or China. Such institution-building has a rationale in a one-party state; but in a multi-party state with still considerable moorings in democratic values and institutions (at least in aspirations) conflicts and contradictions are bound to arise. How the future will shape up will depend on how the rulers view these conflicts, and how they try to resolve them and how the opposition parties deal with this challenge of one party seeking to become a monopoly party. It is possible to identify some trends but they all may boil down to a question of a race between the capacity of the new single-party and its leaders to solve major problems and the growing complexity of the problems they must face. If, through party-affiliated institutions (as opposed to neutral institutions), the present rulers are able to organize a tolerable balance in resolving the major crises of society (order, identity, economic growth, distribution and participation), then perhaps the attachment to democratic values and institutions will gradually wane and a compatible adjustment of the political framework with political realities will be made. If, however, the present rulers fail in this mission and a substantial break in the party takes place, there may be, as a result of the party's inability to cope with the problems adequately, strong pressures to revive democratic ideals and reestablish neutral institutions. In either case, the need for achieving a working compatability between political ideals and political realities is likely to become very acute in the near future.

Another related issue can be noted in the conflict between politics and technocracy. The importance of technocracy in the development process is crucial. Even Communist countries are realizing that they cannot push hard the dictum that officials have to be both red and expert. The Bangladesh rulers would possibly like to see officials in Government, educations, press, public

enterprises and similar agencies become both experts as well as Mujibbadi. In their eagerness to build a political infrastructure to provide the basis for the smooth operation of political processes in national and local decision-making (some may call them partisan structure and partisan approach), the rulers may press too hard on the technocrats and thereby jeopardize their development goals. The imperatives of politics and of development are not always compatible and the capacity of the present rulers to define the limits of politics and promote the needs of development (proper expertise, security and professional freedom, free research and evaluation, etc.) will be crucial. Social organizations are of primary importance but they will not take roots unless they can generate and mobilize resources to meet the mundane needs of 75 million Bengalis in an equitable way.

Before I conclude, I must mention my purposeful omission of Sheikh Mujib's role in this futuristic study. I quite agree with the journalists and analysts that at present the Nation finds its unity and trust mostly in Mujib and not the party. While admitting the crucial role of Mujib in the nation-building of Bangladesh, I must admit that I find it extremely difficult to do any futuristic analysis based mostly on personality factors. I also find cases (Indian National Congress, Gaullist Party in France) where structures and institutions operating under the domination of one all-powerful leader did continue or regain control after the demise of the leader. The vitality and resilience of the Awami League has not yet been tested. But what is known is that this party has developed structures and practices and has overcome with a reasonable degree of success some critical tests (e.g. 1966 movement, 1970 election, liberation movement, 1972 election). I find it more satisfying to look at these structures and practices for identifying future trends and issues.

FOOTNOTES

1. The characterization of approach as used here is determined by the primary emphasis that rulers lay on the type of mechanisms, processes and personalities in defining a problem, preparing the response and implementing it. The rulers of Pakistan depended mostly on government officials, administrative mechanisms, and bureaucratic processes in almost all phases in the resolution of important problems. Retention of elite cadres and All-Pakistan services, One Unit in West Pakistan, Ayub's revival of vice-regal model and Basic Democracies System, are all important illustrations of administrative approach.

2. See, for example, the selections in Joseph La Palombara (ed.) *Bureaucracy and Political Development* (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1963).

3. Several Commission Reports and scholarly authorities that substantiate these points include: Rowland Egger, *The Improvement of Public Administration in Pakistan* (Karachi, 1953); Bernard L. Gladieux, *Reorganization of Pakistan Government for National Development.* Mimeographed, May 1955; *The First Five-Year Plan,* 1955-1960 (Karachi, 1960); *Report of the Pay and Services Commission,* 1959-1962 (Karachi, 1962); Ralph Braibanti, *Research On The Bureaucracy of Pakistan* (Durham, N. C., 1966); and Khalid B. Sayeed, *The Political System of Pakistan* (Boston, 1967); Henry P. Goodnow, *The Civil Service of Pakistan, Bureaucracy in a New Nation* (New Haven, 1964); Karl Von Vorys, *Political Development in Pakistan* (Princeton, 1965); Gustav F. Papanek, *Pakistan's Development: Social Goals and Private Incentives* (Cambridge, Mass., 1967); Herbert Feldman, *Revolution in Pakistan* (London, 1967); Lawrence Ziring, *The Ayub Khan Era* (Syracuse, N. Y., 1971).

4. See for details, *Morning News,* 11 July 1973, p. 1.

5. The First Secretary of the Planning Commission was both a member of ex-CSP and a holder of a Ph.D. in Statistics. The current incumbent is a science graduate and a member of ex-CSP. The responsibility for implementation rests with various Ministries, Departments and public corporations.

6. For the first time since its inception in 1958, a non-cadre professional has reportedly been appointed as the Director of Rural Development Academy, Comilla, Bangladesh.

7. See Articles 179-183 of 1956 Constitution, Articles 174-179 of the 1962 Constitution, and Articles 133-136 of 1972 Constitution

8. Out of several new political parties that emerged since the establishment of Pakistan, Awami League was perhaps the most organized and as recent events show, most popular party in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh). Originally established as East Pakistan Awami Muslim League Party in 1949, it dropped "Muslim" from the title to reflect its secularization in 1955. The party had a leading role in building opposition politics in East Pakistan

through mobilizing support for the recognition of Bengali as a state language, regional autonomy for East Pakistan, and equitable treatment of East Pakistan's interests in the policies of central government. It was a leading member of the United Front which routed the ruling Muslim League in the provincial elections of 1954. The Awami League was in power in the provincial government of East Pakistan and in the Central Government for a period of about two years during 1955 and 1958. The unity of the party was not seriously threatened until it assumed governmental responsibility and found that electoral promises were hard to realize and conflicts between party command and ruler's prerogative were not easily soluble. The party split in 1957 when its founder -- President Moulana Bhashani broke away and formed a new party titled National Awami Party.

With the promulgation of first Martial Law in Pakistan in October 1958 all political parties were suspended and the Awami League was revived after about five years in 1964. The top hierarchy of the party was now more united under the leadership of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, who declared its six-points program in 1966 for the full regional autonomy of East Pakistan. The Ayub Government reacted to the demands of the Awami League by arresting its top leaders and implicating Mujibur in a conspiracy case. Following Ayub's stepping down, which was preceded by Mujib's release from jail, the second Martial Law was imposed in Pakistan. A countrywide election for a National Assembly was held in 1970 in which the Awami League captured 167 of 169 seats allotted to East Pakistan and became the sole spokesman for this wing. The struggle for autonomy led by the Awami League was finally turned into a struggle for liberation which culminated into the separation of East Pakistan and the creation of Bangladesh on 16 December 1971. The Awami League assumed power in the new state of Bangladesh and in the first election based on the new constitution, the party secured an overwhelming popular support.

Many still consider the Awami League as a middle class based outfit, although it has a well-organized student and labour front. In recent times, it has spent considerable energy in building its organizational roots among Bengali peasants and rural youth. From ideological and practical game of patronage it would appear that the Party is trying to preserve its nationalistic "umbrella" character through retention within its Fold of different shades of opinion and divergent socio-political groups.

9. Awami League secured 72.68% of votes cast in 1970 national election. Despite increases in the number of voters in the 1972 election, caused mostly by the reduction of the voting age from 21 to 18, the party has secured almost the same percentage.

10. *Morning News* 13 February, 1973, pp. 8 and 17 February, 1973, pp. 8.

11. The Basic Democracy Councils were renamed as Panchayat Committees consisting mostly of local Awami League leaders and the local officials were ordered to work in close collaboration with these committees.

12. Ninety-two nominees of the Awami League were not members of the past Constituent Assembly. *Morning News*, 2 February, 1973, pp. 1.

13. Reports of dissension over the question of selecting a President and General Secretary of the Party (key positions) appeared in several newspapers in April 1972. The possibility of open split was shelved by retaining Mujib as President, which is against the Party Constitution and surrendering powers of the Council to its President to select office bearers. Mujib changed the incumbent General Secretary who was reported keen to retain his position.

14. All these three affiliated organizations actively canvassed for the nominees of the Awami League in the election. They also reportedly expelled their members who either contested elections or worked for other candidates against the Awami League nominees. Although exact figures are not available, a good many leaders from these organizations got Awami League nominations.

15. The Awami League Government of 1957-58 passed an order that all presidents of Union Boards (lowest tier of local Government in East Pakistan) would be elected directly by the people of the Union. The Government pledges to give maximum powers to Union Parishads (same as Union Boards) and to Pourashavas (urban councils) in order to "have democracy firmly rooted at village level." Preparations to hold election in December '73 to these agencies on direct adult franchise are being made. *Morning News*, 1 September, 1973, p. 1.

16. All the subdivisions would be converted into Districts and the total number of District Governors would be 60 and Thana Administrators 418. See *Morning News*, 2 February, 1973, p. 1.

17. Dwelling upon the party control on the members of Constituent Assembly, Sheikh stated that, to quote a newspaper report, "no member of the Awami League would be allowed to make any resolution or make any proposal without prior consent of the Parliamentary Party." Violation of this rule would make the member liable to punishment including expulsion from the party. He told them that they were members of a Constituent Assembly and not of a Parliament. He advised them to distinguish between a Constituent Assembly and a Parliament.

18. One of the strongest arguments for the retention of CSP, as in the case of ICS, was the ethnic, cultural and linguistic heterogeneity of Pakistan and the need for an institution to inject "national" focus into the governing process. The regional feelings based on districtism and cultural differences (mostly between northerners and easterners -- the River Padma being the dividing lines) may occasionally take serious proportions. The likely places where these feelings may assume political significance are in Northern districts, Chittagong, and Sylhet. Perhaps in anticipating this possibility, the GOB has established "Northern Ganabhavan" in the former premises of Dighapatiya Zaminder in Natore.

19. This is the general tenor of likely recommendations as gathered by the author from his recent visit to Dacca. Sheikh Mujib is reportedly in favor of seven cadres only in place of innumerable divisions. The upper limit of pay has been reduced to almost half of what existed before and there is less gap now between the scales. The implications of the drastic change in pay scales for the organization of services will become known after the report of the Services Reorganization Committee is made public.

20. Historically, the bureaucracy was not favourably inclined to giving power to local bodies. Opposition to such decentralization may provide a common ground for bureaucracy to close up their rank and they may possibly secure the support of technocrats in this cause. This will be a test case of strength between pro-bureaucratic and pro-decentralization forces. It is also possible that political leaders at the national level may resist the process of decentralization on three counts -- loss of power, possibility of other parties getting control at local level, and the uncertainty of the experiment. The hesitancy of the national leaders are already apparent in that they are not clear what form the political decentralization would take at district and sub-district levels. The lines for struggle between forces of centralization and those of diffusion will be drawn soon.

21. Several new programmes such as the Rehabilitation of victims of liberation war, are already organized and special Superior Service Examinations are held to recruit freedom fighters to positions of responsibility in the government. See *Morning News*, October 5, 1973, p. 8.

22. Some of these institutions, like the Awami Jubo League, follow the structural nomenclatures symbolic of Soviet organizations (e.g. Presidium, First Secretary). Bangladesh, like Sri Lanka, probably has an high percentage of youths (15 - 24 years age group), possibly around 22% of the total population or 35% of the population over 15 years of age and this organization may prove to be very significant in the near future. Its President, Sheikh Mujib's nephew is planning to recruit 100,000 members in 1973 and is planning to launch a purge movement on March 8, to quote a newspaper report, "to eliminate opponents of Mujibbad... to eliminate Pakistani-minded bureaucrats, corrupt businessmen, foreign smugglers and anti-social elements." *Morning News*, 16 February, 1973, p. 8.

CONFRONTATION WITHIN A CONFRONTATION: SUBHAS C. BOSE AND THE 1928 STEEL STRIKE

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A special condition generally obtains in the industrial sectors of colonial or semi-colonial states which arises from the fact that sources of conflict not only emerge in the sphere of capital-labor relations but that these very relations are shaped by, and exist in, the context of the exercise of colonial power. Under colonial or imperial rule there almost always arises resistance which is "national" in character and takes the form of a nationalist or anti-imperialist political movement. At some point, it penetrates and influences the domain where capital and labor conflict.[1]

With special reference to the Indian context, I hope to clarify the following questions: To what extent does the multi-class nationalist movement, dominated by the non-laboring classes, find both sources of opposition and support within the economic struggle of the working class? Conversely, under what conditions does the working class and its trade union movement find it advantageous to seek the assistance of leaders of the nationalist movement?[2]

In the year 1928 the Tata Iron and Steel Company (TISCO), a pioneer venture of Indian national capital in heavy industry, was subject to the longest strike in its history.[3] This strike illuminates more than the classical question of "political" as opposed to "economist" trade unionism because it occurred under colonial conditions. The conflict provides an opportunity to study the conditions under which activists of the national movement influence the sphere of industrial conflict and working class collective representation.

All too often the literature has implied an assumption that the urban industrial class is an intrinsic part of the historical national movement -- mobilized at will without respect to its discreteness and relative autonomy. This tendency to admit of only one interpretation is well illustrated by Ornati:

> ". . . until 1947, the history of the labour movement was the history of nationalism with a union label. That is not to say that Indian labour organisations were devoid of class consciousness, uninterested in bettering social conditions, and oblivious of the need to improve

> the workers' living conditions. These goals, however, were considered subsidiary by the trade union organisations and then there was a feeling that they would be attained automatically, almost simultaneously, with independence."

The events to be examined indicate that there is no inherent dynamic in the workers' movement which propels it into alliance with the nationalist forces or which gives the nationalist ideology hegemony over all the under-classes.

Nor would it be accurate to depict all nationalist leaders as recognizing or desiring a "special" role for the trade union movement or working class within the national movement. Gandhi was ambivalent on the question but he can generally be viewed as an advocate of social service or humanitarian trade unionism. Gandhi believed in a concept of trusteeship over wealth and property by the capitalist class whereby they would exercise a paternal care over labor. Through his influence the Ahmedabad Labour Association, a union of textile workers, was kept out of the All-India Trade Union Congress (AITUC).[5] Alternatively, B. P. Wadia, organizer of one of the first modern trade unions, conceived of the trade union as being an integral part of the national movement and proposed Lala Lajpat Rai as the first president of the AITUC precisely because of his "unique experience as a President of the Indian National Congress, as a social worker and as a patriot."[6]

Digressing for the moment, it may be useful to review the four basic tendencies or approaches which have prevailed at various times within the Indian trade union movement. These tendencies usually exist in combination and only rarely do they appear in a clearly isolable form. One approach to trade unionism may be characterized as the "social welfare" or "humanitarian" approach. This tendency is paternalistic, denies fundamental class conflict and only existed in a dominant form in certain instances during the early stages of the development of trade unionism in the first two decades of the twentieth century. The most noted exponents of this tendency are Gandhi, C. F. Andrews, Joseph Baptista and C. F. Ginwala. Another approach is one closely following the Marxist paradigm with its emphasis on fusing political activism with economic demands. A third approach was that of the nationalist leaders who sought to enlist the working class movement as a mass base for their own political programs and organizations. Lala Lajpat Rai, Subhas Chandra Bose, Jawaharlal Nehru and R. S. Ruiker implemented the above approach. A fourth group of trade union leaders espoused a policy advocating the separating of trade unionism from politics. These "economist" or "pure" trade unionists were political moderates and among them are N. M. Joshi and V. V. Giri.

The question of whether or not a trade union movement is political or not, in the final instance, is not determined by the intent of the leadership. The "political" character of a trade union goes beyond self-definition and takes into consideration an objective analysis of the structure and process of the trade union movement in the total socio-political context. I think it can be convincingly argued that the split in the AITUC between "pure" trade unionists and the communist and left-Congress "political" trade unionists was a *political* event of considerable importance.

These contending and concuring views of trade unionism and its relationship to the nationalist political movement are well illustrated by the history of workers' agitations in the Tata Iron and Steel Co. and especially by events surrounding the 1928 strike.

The Tata Iron and Steel Company was one of the first ventures of national capital in India; the vision of J. N. Tata, one of the pioneer national capitalists of the country.[7] The Company acquired a twenty-five square mile tract of land in the Chota Nagpur area near the rail line now knowns as the Bengal-Nagpur railway line. Tatanagar railway station, first known as Kalimati, was approximately 125 miles from Calcutta and this proximity accounts in some measure for the continued commercial, cultural and political influence of this premier Bengal city on Jamshedpur events. The company displaced some sixteen villages populated by marginal cultivators, the principal village being Sakchi which gave the entire area its first name. A steel works was constructed which, at one time, rightfully claimed to be the largest in the British Empire and which was a crucial source of material for the war operations of the British in the middle eastern theatre of World War I.

The company recruited English, American, and German convenanted hands and managers for the initial technical expertise required to begin the production of iron and steel. Much of the labor was externally recruited. A substantial in-migration to Jamshedpur was encouraged and a work force formed which was heterogenous in its religious, linguistic, and regional composition. Syhleti Muslims, Punjabi Sikhs, and N. W. F. P. and Afghan Pathans were recruited for the arduous work of operating the blast furnances, coke ovens, and rolling and finishing mills. Local tribals (*adivasis*), depressed class workers from the industrial periphery of Bombay, and Chattisgarhias were recruited for work in transportation, cartage, sweeping and other important tasks of an unskilled nature. The clerical staff was almost entirely dominated by upper caste Hindus from Bengal and Madras. Parsis, Bengalis and Arya Samaj Punjabis occupied some supervisory positions.[8]

TISCO first began production in 1912. The demand for iron and steel during World War I and guaranteed rail contracts with the government brought considerable profits in the early years and encouraged the company to embark on a Greater Extension Scheme in 1916.

The demands of industrial production exerted a hegemonic influence over the lives of the participants and tended to homogenize very disparate elements in the process of production although regional and communal values have always persisted. Industry required the development of new norms of commitment and discipline. However strongly pre-industrial norms may have been within the family or the privacy of the workers' homes, in the process of production industrial norms tended to be dominant. The worker entered a process in which dependency on self-sufficient production such as peasant agriculture was non-existent; where standardization and regimentation prevailed; where discipline and effort were tied to the application of detail labor to a systematic process of production in which the worker generally participated only at one instance; and where the underlying economic reality placed the individual worker before the capitalist as the seller of labor

power. The worker had little identification with the final product of the combined labor, received compensation through a largely standardized wage system and, above all, entered a system demanding a monotonous regularity, punctuality, and a rhythm of life unbroken by the seasons.[9]

The company carried on a continuous effort to transform a pre-industrial population into a modern labor force. In so doing, TISCO could only rely on its own capacities for the production of an infrastructure which would provide the shelter, distribution of goods, food, medical services, and educational facilities required for the subsistence of its labor. The dominant political and social reality of municipal life flowed from the fact that Jamshedpur was a proprietory town -- carved out of wilderness and built over easily-razed agricultural villages; a town which transformed, rather than coexisted with, the natural conditions obtaining in the area.

A high degree of centralization and an over-all plan of development was initiated to provide the services and amenities required, although the rate and sequence of their introduction was a subject of continual contention between capital and labor.[10] Early disputes focused on demands for adequate provision of shelter. Tent cities gave way to family swellings and hostels laid out in patterns which relected the hierarchy of occupation and its attendent socio-economic rewards. The housing sections tended to reflect norms of organization based on class stratification and derivative from the logic of the relation-ships in production. However, some concessions were made to pre-industrial communal interests and the hostels for men who were single or without family were organized on a communal or regional bais. Unskilled and contract workers, then called coolies and *rejas*, were at first housed in "coolie lines" but in time the interstices of the housing sections for the skilled and semi-skilled became crowded with illegal collections of shanties and makeshift dwellings known as *bustees*.[11]

Self-organization of the workers was absent until 1920. Prior to that time the company played a paternalistic role by hiring welfare officers, the first being Thakkur Bapa of the Servants of India Society. Both the Vivekan-anda Society and the Arya Samaj, composed respectively of Bengali and Punjabi Hindu "intelligentsia," did some social welfare work as well.

The first significant conflict emerged in 1920 and workers downed tools and quit the blacksmith and machine shops on February 24 of that year. The strike was a response to spiraling prices, deficiencies in the company's grain stores, and the abuse of Indian labor by European personnel. One of the chroniclers of these early struggles indicates that the leading workers were also influenced by the strike in the railway workshops at Kharagpur and the political unrest which followed the Jallianwalla Bagh massacre.[12]

The spontaneous actions of the workers led to considerable confusion because the workers felt inadequate in communicating and pressing their grievances to management. Reliance on external leadership has a long history in the Indian labor movement. Fears of victimization, feelings of inadequacy in articulation of grievances and lack of skills in negotiations are some of the factors which explain why the Indian workers often sought the assistance

of skilled and articulate professionals, especially those who had established a political reputation or a reputation for advocacy in the language of the imperial power.

In this early strike, the workers asked nationalist Byomesh Chakravarti to assist them in making representation to management. Chakravarti was unable to come but deputed a lawyer, Suren Halder, to go from Calcutta to Jamshedpur. Halder was unable to resolve the strike but helped in organizing a trade union called the Labour Association. From the first the Association's leadership was primarily drawn from the pro-nationalists from Bengal. Although the original strike leaders had been predominatly Punjabi skilled workers, when the Executive of the Labour Association was formed the members were predominantly Bengali clerical technical workers such as chemists and laboratory assistants. Regional "nationalism" was to have serious consequences for the development of the Labour Association.

The strike was resolved with minor benefits for the workers but not before the killing of five Sikh Punjabi workers in a police firing and the wounding of twenty-four others at a militant demonstration to keep strike-breakers from entering the plant.[13]

Grievances continued to accumulate but the Labour Association was unable to gain much authority among the workers for a variety of reasons. Although the company had recognized the Association, it contrived to ensure that the young union would not enhance its prestige among the workers or to make it an effective organization for representing grievances.

The fledgling union was further isolated when TISCO set up its own Central Welfare Committee, with departmental representation, which competed with the Association as a forum for grievances and badly undercut the Association's authority. In addition, the narrow occupational and regional identification of the Association isolated it from the mass of workers as did the elitist attitude of its officers. Lastly, the Association failed to develop any kind of militant stance on the issues vexing the workers; its program was passive and accommodating.

Militants in the Labour Association forced a thirty-three day strike in 1922 which was a failure. This failure can be partly attributed to the intervention of Dewan Chamanlal of the AITUC who failed to include the Association in negotiations and made an unrecorded settlement which was later repudiated.[14] This strike lost the Association the recognition of the company, led to discharge from company employment of some of the most militant workers, and lost the Association any credibility it had.

The Association became the political creature of a group of workers who were pro-nationalist but failed completely to develop a base among the workers. These leaders looked for external help and were fortified by the assistance of C. R. Das and Motilal Nehru who negotiated Swaraj Party support for Tata's application for tariff protection in consideration of TISCO recognizing the union.[15] C. F. Andrews became the President of the Labour Association

when Gandhi came to Jamshedpur and resolved the deadlock between company and union in 1925. TISCO would recognize the union but before it had agreed to do so it wrested a major concession from the Swaraj politicians: the two vice-presidents of the union would be company officers.

Gandhi's Jamshedpur speech most clearly expressed his concept of trusteeship, his conviction that capital and labor were not antagonistic, and that capital had a duty of "not only looking to the material welfare of the labourers but their moral welfare also -- capitalists being trustees for the welfare of the labouring classes under them."[16] Before departing he advised, "May God grant that, in serving the Tatas, you will also serve India. . . ."[17]

Mass trade unionism of a sustained nature emerged as a consequence of the 1928 strike which developed "outside" of the Association. The Association had been unsuccessful in convincing the workers that it was the best vehicle for articulating and resolving the workers' demands. A fraction of the Association's leadership formed an opposition which pressed for greater militancy, relied less on negotiation for concessions and waged an agitational program against the company. Pressure on the Association originated in several departments -- notably among the overhead crane drivers workers in the boiler department and in the sheet mills. Company officers felt that the workers were motivated by the settlement of the Bengal-Nagpur Railway strike with terms favorable to the workers and expressed concern over the increased "insubordination."[18]

Beginning in December of 1927 there occurred a series of departmental work stoppages lasting for short durations. Their occurrence caused some deep contradictions in the Labour Association in which a faction developed opposed to the gradualist and passive methods of C. F. Andrews and the majority of the committee. This faction argued for a vigorous policy of representation and agitation wherever grievances were not quickly responded to by the company. They felt that the way grievances were handled had the effect of diffusing their efforts, was used for deflection of grievances and not their resolution and that this caused the greater number of workers to be apathetic towards the Association. They also continued to resent the participation of the company's officers in the union.

Recognizing that the workers would act independently of the Association if the situation were not altered, some members of the opposition faction began to deal independently with the workers. One militant, Nani Gopal Mukherjee, helped to organize some of the sporadic work stoppages. Andrews attempted to stop the strikes but his efforts failed or led to other crises. Commenting on the rolling strikes, the company declared that the men were not moved by real grievances but by the "spirit of Bolshevism."[19] As the strikes spread, a pattern of leadership composed of activists hostile to the Labour Association emerged throughout the Works.

In late February, some of the rank and file militants approached a local pleader, Maneck Homi, to assist them in making representations to the company and defending them from victimization. The choice of Homi was important because the company felt that no more inimical choice could have been made. At one time Homi had been a petty officer of the company but

had left the company's employ to study steel-making in the United States. After gaining some practical experience in American steel technology, he returned to India seeking re-employment with the company. He pursued TISCO's Bombay directors with plans, ideas and criticisms and, in so doing, also incurred the hostility of the Jamshedpur management of which he was very critical. TISCO did not offer him employment and Homi wrote a comprehensive critique of what he considered inefficiencies and diseconomies in the management of the TISCO works. Moreover, he presented his critique before the Tariff Commission and argued against the company's application for bounty and protection.[20] This critical submission earned him the permanent and deep enmity of the company's officers. In the year following the Tariff Board hearings (1924), Homi's father was discharged from the company's employ and Homi's resentment was substantially increased by what he felt was the vicimization of his father.

Homi readily agreed to assist the dissident workers. He was a skilled orator and had a well developed sense of tactics. He encouraged the program of departmental *hartals* (strikes) knowing that this would effectively cost the company a great deal but at the same time would not expose the workers to the economic hardships of a general strike.

Homi propounded no systematic ideology and initally his ideas were essentially "economist" with respect to trade unions. He was a militant when it came to the economic struggles of the working class but had no commitment to any political organization. He was not a supporter of the nationalist movement and felt that nationalist politics would debilitate the economic struggle of the workers. It would not be unfair to say that his actions attitude were also coloured by personal opportunism and his subjective experiences with the company.[21]

The novice trade unionist was able to unify the fragmented striking and dissatisfied elements. He brought a much needed sense of collectivity and an over-all co-ordination where there had previously been atomization. Not only did he begin to weld together the disparate elements but he also began to build a broad "movement." External labor and political leaders of various "communities" and tendencies were introduced on the platforms of Jamshedpur labor to increase excitement and enthusiasm, to articulate ideological justification for the disturbances, and to reduce the sense of isolation of the workers. A variety of leftists working in the labor movement in Bengal arrived as platform speakers: Mukundlal Sarcar of the Bengal Trade Union Federation, Philip Spratt of the Communist Party of Great Britain, and the Madrasi communist Singaravelu Chetty.[22] The speakers also attacked the Labour Association.

In mid-April, TISCO introduced a profut-sharing bonus in the hopes that it would defuse the increasingly tense situation, stabilize the workforce, increase commitment and loyalty to participation in industry, link any increased returns to the worker to increased productivity and rationalize the organization of the plant. The plan was applauded throughout the Indian press but it was met with little enthusiasm by the workers whose demand had

been for a general wage increase. Moreover, the profit sharing bonus scheme was to be complemented by a reorganization of the plant which would render a considerable number of workers redundant.

The company did not succeed in its objectives. More strikes occurred including a strike of sweepers which took the problem out of the Works and into the Town as garbage collection and other sanitation duties came to a halt.

Attempts were made to depict the strikes as "communist plots."[23] Although some communist leaders did visit the town, no communists can be said to have been active in the organization of any of the workers agitations of 1928. Accusations were made that Homi was a "Bolshevik" but Homi was more of an opportunist than a communist political agent. He was prepared to use any assistance offered to build the workers' movement and invited leaders of all political persuasions to share the labor platform. Further, 1928 was a year of "red scare" throughout India because of the sharp increase of workers' agitations many of which were, in fact, led by communists.[24] These external agitations no doubt influenced the officers' thinking.

During the latter part of May and June the strike built up in intensity despite the attempts of both company and Labour Association to persuade the men to halt their activities and resort to negotiations. Labour Association efforts were fruitless and the company resorted to discharging labor activists in order to intimidate the strikers and try to draw the period of labor militancy to a close.

A series of leaders from the AITUC came to Jamshedpur in an attempt to mediate the differences. V. V. Giri came in early May on the invitation of the Labour Association but he had no success. Towards the end of May, N. M. Joshi, then General Secretary of the AITUC, came to Jamshedpur to study the situation. He was followed by an interesting constellation of political and trade union leaders; all contributing to the cacaphony of advice and exhortation. Homi's committee was being advised by Mukund Lal Sarcar, a nationalist and leftist, and by W. V. R. Naidu, a colleague of Giri's and a leader of the Kharagpur railway strike. N. M. Joshi at first counselled the liquidation of the strike but after sensing the militancy of the strikers sought to have the Labour Association take over its leadership. Homi requested AITUC backing but Joshi declined on the grounds that this would have the effect of repudiating the Association, an AITUC affiliate.

By June, attendance in the Works had fallen considerably. At this juncture, Homi requested a governmental inquiry into the disputes, presumably on Joshi's advice, and a position Joshi was to publicly advocate on his return to Bombay. But government declined to intervene without the agreement of both parties to the dispute.

The strike was extensively reported in the Indian press. The pro-British papers tended to treat the strike as a case of ungrateful workers plaguing the most "enlightened" -- if not the most "indulgent" -- of Indian employers

with indiscipline and anarchy.[25] The papers sympathetic to the Indian National Congress expressed fears that a *national* industry was under attack while expressing their own concern with Tata's slow progress in the "Indianization" of the firm. Even the "left" nationalist papers emphasized the national question as opposed to the economic questions which had brought the workers out. They did, however, indicate that the economic question would be more easily resolved if the "expensive" European and American covenanted employees were replaced by Indians.

> The plague spot in the management of the Tatas is to be found in the differential treatment meted out to Indian labour and the Covenanted employees recruited from England and America. A study of the general grievance formulated by the strikers brings home the truth that the present strike draws its nourishment from the racial bias that vitiates the management through and through.[26]

The strike was stabilized through the visitations of small committees to the workers' quarters throughtout Jamshedpur. Picketing had been resorted to infrequently and became unnecessary after June 1 when the company declared a lock-out. The vast steel works came to a halt as the hands and muscles required to make it live absented themselves. Shortly after the lock-out, the company attempted to introduce a scheme of selective hiring by which a committee would screen the workers TISCO wished to rehire. It was hoped that by this method the company could obtain sufficient "loyalist" labor to recommence production and at the same time "trim" its labor force of redundant men without open retrenchment. At first, however, only clerical and technical workers were inclined to answer the call.[27]

Neither the tactics of the company nor the bewailings of the shareholders were able to break the strike. In fact, a minority of shareholders were beginning to bring pressure on the company to settle. The TISCO administration in Bombay began a series of meetings to enlist loyal shareholders who would issue statements to the press endorsing the management policies.[28]

Surprisingly, attempts to have outside "agitators" externed or have proceedings brought against them met with little success. The American General Manager had an excessive preoccupation with communists and sought to have several speakers declared seditious and prosecuted. Writing to Tata Sons, Ltd., H. K. Briscoe, Chief Secretary, Government of Bihar and Orissa advised the company:

> It is not sufficient to dub a man a communist in order to assume powers to pass a prohibitory order against him: an order excluding anyone from Jamshedpur must be based on reasons which are good in law.[29]

Briscoe went on to comment that "no serious disorders followed on any of these meetings" and said that, with respect to sedition, "agitators from outside probably know the law perfectly well and have no intention of overstepping it."[30]

One of Tata's shareholders, representative of a group somewhat sympathetic to the strikers, wrote an open letter to Homi warning that a prolonged strike might permanently cripple the company which would be disastrous because of its national character and which would be of considerable advantage to foreign interests inimical to India's freedom.[31]

Homi replied advising that:

> . . . hartals are merely large scale organised eye-openers for the grievances of the oppressed, who have no press of their own. I am surprised that you and your friends should condemn Jamshedpur HARTALS, led by an humble individual like me, on insufficient and misleading information, whilst you have nothing but unstinted praise for Bardoli Satyagraha, probably because it has been led by a well known figure and because it is against Government.[32]

However, one important factor faced the strikers in making their work stoppage complete. A large group of Bengali supervisory, technical and clerical workers continued to attend the Works. Their leadership came from two sources: the pro-nationalist and Bengali-dominated Labour Association which was inimical to Homi and to the strike and from S. Gupta, the company's powerful Land Officer and the vice-president of the Vivekananda Society.

Homi had previously offered to resolve the conflict if an inquiry was agreed to by Sir Visvevaray of the company and either Subhas Chandra Bose or N. M. Joshi representing the workers.[33] Towards the end of July the matter of resolution became an acute one and Homi attempted to find a path to solution but the company was adamant in its decision not to negotiate with him. The company was willing to negotiate with the Labour Association but that organization could not have effectively implemented any agreement.

The strike was in a precarious condition and seemed permanently deadlocked. Many workers had returned to their villages, depositing a rupee to cover the cost of a telegram to be sent notifying them when hostilities were over. The solidarity of the strikers was eroding as men from all departments began to attempt a return to work. Although the continued attendance at work of the clerks and technicians was not sufficient to run the plant, the return of a body of production workers raised the very real possibility of reactivating the plant.

At this crucial point, Homi and the Strike Committee decided to seek the assistance of Subhas Chandra Bose. Bose had already been requested to intervene by Lalubhai Samaldas, a nationalist supporter and TISCO director whose son was active in the Congress. Bose had previously declined to arbitrate the dispute and suggested that the company enlist Motilal Nehru. Homi went to see Bose on August 17 and Bose agreed to go to Jamshedpur the following day after a last minute appeal to Nehru to intervene in the dispute. Bose telegrammed this information to Samaldas and also told him that he could not "reasonably advise (the) men to resume work."[34]

Bose arrived in Jamshedpur as Homi's invitee on August 18, to the consternation and discomfort of the Labour Association Executive Committee. He addressed a meeting attended by ten thousand workers. Bose's speech had no "tone of conciliation."[35] He affirmed the justness of the workers' cause and endorsed Homi's leadership and told the workers "that their victory would not only help them but all Indian labour and would also assist India in obtaining freedom."[36] Later a special meeting of the Bengali community was convened at which Bose successfully enlisted the support of the Bengali employees for the strike, largely on the basis of "regionalist" sentiment and nationalist appeal. At this time, Bose believed that if the strike was defeated the general trade union movement would be weakened to the detriment of the Congress movement.

The next day, after consultations with the Labour Association, the Association joined the strike and the *ad hoc* Strike Committee was fused with the Association. Bose was elected the President of the Labour Association in the absence of Andrews and Homi was given the post of Vice-President. In addition to the obvious advantage of consolidating the workers movement, the Association was a source of additional funding to the strikers as it had a balance of some ten thousand rupees.

Bose contacted Samaldas and asked him to intervene by having one or more Tata directors come to Jamshedpur with authority to settle the strike. Homi, at the same time, was carrying on propaganda to the effect that the obstacle to settlement was Alexander, the General Manager, and that certain TISCO directors were sympathetic to settlement. Homi also stated that Alexander was interested in prolonging the strike in order that American steel interests could take advantage of the situation. An associate of Samaldas's son, G. L. Mehta, also pointed out the advantage of settling with Bose: "it is necessary to give in, say, to a man like Subash so that he might strengthen his influence with labour by showing that he has brought substantial concessions, while Homi's position might be correspondingly weakened."[37]

Mehta made a further point about Bose which apparently was not lost on the directors sympathetic to the Congress:

> . . . re. the question of Capital and Labour. As I have already written to you, he is a nationalist first and foremost and he recognises that Tata Steel is a national industry (of a sort) and realises that if it suffers heavily, American capital which is very anxious to get control over it will step in.[38]

On September 4, Bose began negotiations with the two TISCO directors who had come from Bombay -- the Chairman of the company, N. B. Saklatvala and Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola. The directors gave an indication that they would be willing to negotiate a settlement but made it clear that they would exclude Homi from the talks. Bose put the facts of the deadlock to Homi who reluctantly agreed. The workers had struggled for a considerable length of time and were growing weary. Although the lockout did not occur until June 1, the previous seven months had been months of uninterrupted conflict. There was strong pressure from the workers to achieve some settlement although there is no indication that the strike was on the verge of immanent collapse. Faced with the increasing economic hardship and demoralization of the workers, Homi and his committee decided not to object to the company's insistence that Homi be excluded from negotiations. Another complicating factor arose out of the frailness of the alliance between the Labour Association and the *ad hoc* Strike Committee; the collaboration had a patchwork quality which was only overcome by the political and personal authority of Bose and the fact that Homi did not oppose it. Already, however, the factions in the reconstituted Labour Association were at odds over the question of what policies would characterize the Association after the strike.

The settlement Bose arrived at cannot be considered as strongly in favor of the workers.[39] It granted loans and a deferred payment scheme for arrears in house rent instead of strike or lockout pay. It included a scheme for retrenchment of about twenty per cent of the work force with a provision for a system of voluntary separation with bonus. After twelve months of operation of the voluntary scheme and the filling of vacancies by internal transfer, the company was free to "resort to immediate retrenchment."[40] In addition, much was left for future decisions with an explicit provision for Labour Association representation

Homi opposed the settlement although the majority of his committee accepted it. Homi tried to argue for a three day waiting period to review the settlement but Bose said that he would appeal directly to the workers if Homi continued to oppose the settlement. The Strike Committee made an abortive attempt to dissolve the Labour Association and to reconstitute themselves as a new Association. The rupture with Bose was complete and the dissidents quickly arranged to call a meeting to denounce the agreement. This would have been an unfructious act were it not given impetus by certain actions the company took on the first day of return to duty. As the men and women returned to work a large proportion were given work tickets or time cards with the word "surplus" stamped across them. This meant that the workers with "surplus" tickets would be placed in spare gangs and if voluntary and regular attrition did not reduce the work force by approximately twenty per cent within twelve months these ticket-holders would be retrenched. The full import of the retrenchment clause in the settlement did not inform the consciousness of the workers until that moment. They knew then that a large proportion of their number were potential retrenchees. At the meeting called by the dissident group the mood of the crowd turned ugly and Bose was denounced as was the Bengali community to whom Bose had appeared overly partial.

> Violent and exciting speeches were being delivered strongly denouncing the terms of the settlement when Mr. Subhas Bose motored in. News of his arrival brought forth insulting and threatening language as *mari, nakaldeo*, etc. towards him instead of words of welcome. . . . The Deputy Commissioner met and intimated to him that it would be unwise on his part to be there judging from the situation and requested him to leave the place.[41]

Bose succeeded in addressing the meeting, by then patrolled by a unit of Gurkha police, and managed to mollify the workers somewhat.

However there was a deep undercurrent of discontent and disillusionment to be tapped by the dissidents. Under Homi's leadership, the dissidents quickly organized a rival labor union called the Labour Federation.

The new Federation did not grow rapidly until the beginning of the following year. This was partly because Bose managed to wrest a few more concessions from the company which was interested in containing Homi by expanding Bose's influence. Among the workers were those who knew that it was important to the company to contain the more militant organization and anticipated that the company would concede a great deal while the threat of the Federation existed. But the company was growing disillusioned with the dilemma in which it found itself. In a letter to one of the directors of the company, the General Manager complained:

> When talking to Bose the other day about giving the additional money for increments, I said that it was the last straw, I said that we could not give one more thing in order to help him down Homi. I told him, as you said, that if we kept on, we would . . . give everything that Homi ever asked for and it would be a victory for him and the people would know it.[42]

It will be useful to interupt this narrative to try to define the ideologies of the leaderships which were contending in the labor sphere. Although it would be oversimplistic to impute the political ideologies of the leaders to all their followers, two very divergent views of the relationship of the Jamshedpur trade unions to political independence and the Congress can be defined.

For Bose, most grievances between capital and labor could be resolved within the framework of negotiation. He did however encourage the company to accommodate itself to the vitality and strength of the young labor movement:

> Whether the capitalists like it or not, the labour movement has made rapid strides during the last few years and to-day it cannot be trifled with. We shall try our level best to direct this movement along healthy channels. But whether we shall succeed or whether the unruly and irriational elements will get the upper hand depends on the company and the management.[43]

However, being first a politician committed to national independence a trade unionist by default the central issue for Bose was "the supremely important question of Indianisation."[44] Bose saw his reluctant participation in trade union work as an extension of his work in the Congress which assumed that a "patriotic" capitalism was not necessarily in conflict with other classes of the society existing under an imperial system. Also, Bose believed that national industry had a special character and that as a Congress-nationalist his role was to mediate contradictions between national capital and labor and not allow them to work against the formation of a multi-class nationalist bloc.[45]

It can thus be understood why Bose came to think of Homi's leadership as "extremist" and saw his own role and that of his co-workers from Calcutta, Madan Mohan Burman and Maulana Samshuddin Ahmed, as the only force capable of mediating the very real danger of conflict. This mediational role implied that Bose thought of his work with labor as transcending the class conflict between capital and labor. Subsequent to a conference with the TISCO management, he wrote the General Manager a letter in which he clearly put himself in the position of a mediator of labor disputes, not a partisan of labor: "If your officers think that we are unduly alarmist and that they Can (sic) cope with the situation -- we shall gladly retire from the field."[46] He was to reiterate this position many times.

Also, Bose had a profound distrust of the Indian workers and was an elitist; perhaps attitudes more a reflection of his own class background and political position than a concrete analysis of the Indian working class:

> We are in the habit of handling large masses of men -- that is our profession, as it were, and we claim to have some insight into crowd psychology. If we are to handle labour properly we have to remember that the Labourer is not as reasonable or logical as you and I are. He does not think as you and I do! He is susceptible to mass suggestion and even the most irrational ideas and suggestions influence him profoundly. This is particularly the case where there is unrest, whether of an open or of and underground character.[47]

Homi was not connected to any political group at the time. Elsewhere I have alluded to him as an opportunist. However, his venture into trade unionism was to lead him to a long political career which, whatever success it may have lacked, had ideological purpose. His political position at the time of the events under investigation is summed up in a report of a speech made to a workers rally on January 26, 1930, the date of the Congress flag-raising ceremonies;[48] an event Homi attended to placate his followers. The report is a useful statement because in his speech Homi clearly contrasted his views with those of the Congress. Homi stated that if *swaraj* (freedom) was the goal then he and the Congress differed on the path to, and substance of, independence. He strongly believed that *swaraj* would not

benefit either the workers or the peasants if government "passed from the hands of Europeans to Indians" as both were for capitalism. The independence Homi advocated could only be a substantial freedom when achieved by the workers and peasants themselves. In addition, he postulated that the primary task at this time (1930) was to build strong worker and peasant organizations and pointed out that the labor and peasant classes had not achieved a sufficient degree of unity and organization to enable them to win struggles around economic demands, let alone fight the British for independence. Referring to the Soviet Union as an example, he stated that workers' unity and organization were the conditions precedent to the fight for independence.

The leadership of the Labour Association was predominantly nationalist. The committee of the post-settlement period was essentially the same as that which had existed during the strike but once again including the "ginger" group which had bolted and joined the Strike Committee. The core of the Labour Association's executive committee were to dominate Congress politics in the town for many years. The Congress came to be identified with the Labour Association and the workers attitude to the Congress movement as a whole was generally to be congruent with how they viewed the Labour Association at any particular time. Homi's committee, on the other hand, was more ideologically diverse. It included a number of nationalists and a few pro-communists but it was largely composed of men with deep grievances which had not been redressed, other militants, and essentially "economist" trade unionists.

Immediately after the 1928 strike, the organizational initiative shifted to the Association, partly because of Bose's leadership and partly because of company concessions to the Association, and the Federation had a difficult time to build a following in the face of an implacable company hostility. But the company's hostility also won the Federation considerable respect as it symbolized for many of the workers the antithesis to company domination. Also, Homi had been able to win a wider representation from the various linguistic, regional and religious groups of Jamshedpur, including tribal men and women workers whose militancy was second only to that of the Punjabi Sikhs. It should be mentioned that the Federation also attracted workers who the company would not rehire and who hoped that participation in the union would offer an opportunity for winning back their jobs. In a town with few social institutions not dominated by the company and no working class political institutions worthy of the name, the Federation served the purposes of an institution of workers' opposition and which it substantiated by militant action.

During the remainder of 1928, Bose was able to provide the Labour Association with some semblance of a program. The General Manager and the General Superintendent were sympathetic to him and his relations with the Chairman of the Company were cordial. "Middle" management continued to be hostile to Bose, however, and it was precisely this strata of European and American covenanted employees which manifested the racism and instances of physical intimidation which so incensed the Indian workers. In the immediate period after the strike, this strata of management exhibited considerable ill will to the workers and pursued a vengeful course of action which did not help the company or the Labour Association build an atmosphere of reconciliation.

The Federation was building its membership precisely on the basis of those grievances to which the Labour Association did not attend in a militant fashion. The Federation's membership grew and the union applied to TISCO for recognition for purposes of negotiation and representation of grievances. The company declined to co-operate and instead began a series of steps which was to expand and protract labor conflict in Jamshedpur. Federation activists began to be harassed by being discharged from employment and subjected to civil suits initiated by the company all of which the Federation interpreted as "throwing the gauntlet."[49] The involvement in civil suits forced the Federation to increase its militancy as it had no resources outside of direct confrontation to protect its position. The Federation threatened the company with *hartals* (strikes) which had the added effect of panicking the Labour Association which admitted: "We realise that we might not have been able to secure the full benefits to the workers of Jamshedpur for reasons that are best known to themselves."[50] Bose was unable to spend much time in Jamshedpur because of political work in the nationalist movement and his absence exposed a real weakness in the Association. Without Bose the Association was unable to mobilize much support which indicated that the Association's prominence was entirely dependent on the infrequent appearances of Bose. This inability to develop a mass base was indicated in a comment by the General Manager in his discussion with the Association's General Secretary:

> Naidu acknowledges that the old Labour Association is weak. The trouble is that they still have the old executive committee and are afraid to hold a general election for fear that Homi & Co. will be elected. They cannot go out, that is the executive committee, and do propaganda work against Homi as they do not have the illiterate workmen's confidence on account of them all being clerks, or 90% of them.[51]

The Labour Federation was finally able to achieve registration under the *Trades Union Act* (XVI of 1926) and this ushered in a period of open conflict for hegemony over the trade union movement in Jamshedpur, the details of which are chronicled elsewhere.[52] What is important for the purposes of this study is to describe the subsequent phases of trade unionism with respect to this first confrontation between nationalist and non-nationalist leadership.

Bose continued to attempt to build the union but was hampered in his efforts by the very limited time he could spend at Jamshedpur. And this was at a time when a full time leader with great credibility was demanded by the Labour Association considering it was to be in a continued state of crisis from 1929 to 1938.

From December, 1928 to March 1929, the Federation brought increasing pressure on both the company and the Association. This period included a number of physical confrontations which spread to the associated companies in Jamshedpur.[53] One of these confrontations is important because it provides us with an example of a nationalist-led strike in a British Indian company and is less an example of Congress mediational trade unionism than it is of Congress competition in militant tactics. The confrontation also allows the comparison of styles of leadership between the steel strike and another strike in the same area.

The confrontation examined occurred between labor and the Tinplate Company of India. The company was owned by the Burmah Oil Company, holding 60% of the shares, and TISCO which owned the remainder. Up to this time the relations between Tinplate and TISCO had been somewhat antagonistic because of a number of disputes arising over management of the company and its peculiar status as a "tenant" of TISCO.[54] Tinplate had accepted the formation of a union in its plant after the 1928 strike and had avoided the spread of the TISCO unrest into its sphere by making concessions in anticipation of trouble.[55] Bose had been approached by the Bengali workers to lead the union but opposed by Punjabi and Madrasi workers to lead the union but opposed by Punjabi and Madrasi workers who favoured Homi. A compromise was reached by electing one Daud, an Alderman of the City of Calcutta, President of the Seamen's Union, and a Vice-President of the AITUC. Daud was an associate of Bose and came on his recommendation. Unrest occured in December of 1929 and when Daud failed to lead with sufficient militancy, he was removed and Homi elected in his place. Homi managed a reasonable settlement of grievances, partly because he had the respect of John Leyshon, the American General Manager who was a veteran trade unionist and had led a militant strike at Gary, Indiana.[56] This concession to Homi added to his prestige and infuriated the TISCO management.

But the vice-president of the Golmuri Tinplate Workers' Union, J. N. Mitra, was a nationalist and a "left" militant who sought to turn every instance of grievance into a test of strength between the management and the union. He was well aware of the apathy with which the passive Labour Association was held by the workers and wished to restore the credibility of the Congress. Support for Homi was eventually undermined and a militant strike was organized which was both economic and political. Nehru, Bose, Abdul Bari and other Congress leaders came to Jamshedpur and tried to integrate support for the strike with general support for the Congress movement. The strike was ultimately unsuccessful and many workers were discharged, but its leaders joined the Labour Association and became part of the trade union -- Congress leadership nucleus which came into prominence some ten years later under the militant leadership of Abdul Bari (1938-39).

What the strike indicated was that the Congress unionists were inclined to militant opposition when a company was British rather than when it was national. Also, the leadership attempted to combine political work with the economic struggle and, though the strike was lost, it did produce a cadre of Congress workers many of whom are still active today.

From February 1929 on the Congress and opposition unions in Jamshedpur entered into open conflict in which the balance of physical force was on the side of the Federation. Because the leaders of the pro-Congress union were accountable to external political forces they did not have the same freedom to maneuver as the Labour Federation. Homi often turned a blind eye to the violent elements who battled on behalf of the Federation and there are indications that he encouraged this sort of open conflict. The peak of the violence saw the wrecking of the headquarters of the Labour Association; after which the authorities stepped in and called a halt, intimating that Homi would be jailed if his followers did not act within the law. The war continued in the form of leaflets with diatribes and polemics aimed at each other. Any group of workers who could be weaned from the Labour Federation was used as a nominal author of

a bulletin attacking Homi and the Federation. Strangely enough, the propaganda campaign did not go beyond diatribes and articulation of economic grievances. It might have been expected that the Labour Association would have articulated its pro-Congress views but his was not done.

The Labour Association depicted Homi as a dictator using the union for his own personal ends and alleged financial irresponsibility on his part. The Federation charged the Labour Association with being a passive, sell-out union which was the special preserve of "the fat foremen and the grasping clerks."[57] The Federation also attacked a Bose's leadership and charged him with being a company *dalal* (agent). The Federation continued to denounce the settlement charging Bose with having sold out the workers and demeaning his continued efforts:

> With thirty thousand workmen at his back, he could not conquer a handful of Directors. He now wants to secure General Increments for you with the help of three thousand Babus.[58]

Bose attempted to enlist the company's support on the basis of their mutuality of interest in seeing the violent and militant Federation eliminated. But the management was re-evaluating the situation and beginning to consider accommodation with Homi. In a complete reversal of their previous attitude, Tata Director Peterson commented privately:

> Bose and the Labour Association did not settle the strike. They never in any sense represented the workers. They represented the Bengali clerks and foremen. The real workers resent this and are solid for Homi as against Bose. I do not find Homi at all truculent . . . I want to end this state of concealed war at once. To do that I want a moratorium to begin with, a suspension of hostilities . . . Bose & Co. may try to make trouble but I don't look for it unless it develops into a political thing due to Bengalis and clerical staff forming the Congress Party here.[59]

The company recognized the Labour Federation on March 13 of 1929 but the detente was short-lived. The anticipated cessation of inter-union rivalries, to which the company had hardly been a neutral party, increased. Also, the Federation was born out of an implacable hostility to the company and its leadership could not afford to change its stance lest it lose its following to the rival Association.

At this juncture the company did a *volte face* and pursued the most aggressive campaign it had yet undertaken to rid itself of the labor militants. The tactics to eliminate the Federation involved both direct physical confrontation and a series of litigations in the courts.[60] Several officers organized groups of *goondas* (strong-arm gangs) which physically abused Federation workers. This was an unsuccessful course of action because violence was met with equal violence and brought both Federation and company into sharp conflict with the Government. Concurrently, tenants and neighboring cultivators were encouraged to trespass on Homi's *zamindari* and embroil Homi in a number of civil cases. Other suits were initiated and a lawyer was specially recruited from Bombay to orchestrate a series of cases against Homi, the Federation and a number of its active leaders. The effect of these actions was that Homi was either in jail or in legal battles from 1930-1935. The most crippling case

arose within the Federation itself arising out of a split in the Federation's executive over the political machinations of certain disaffected elements and out of the financial irresponsibility of the leadership. One faction brought embezzlement charges against three of the Federations officers, including Homi, which led to civil and criminal suits all of which[61] Homi and his officers lost.

With Homi tied up in legal cases, the Federation went into decline. Dependence on the strength of a single strong leader and internal disunity rendered the Federation incapable of carrying out any programs. Support did not shift however to the Association. Bose also had served a jail term in 1930 arising out of political events in Calcutta. On his release he returned to Jamshedpur to be confronted not only with the decline of the rival union but with the Association itself in a moribund condition.

Financially hamstrung, he made an appeal to Jamshedpur workers:

> Owing to the division among the workers and the unsympathetic attitude of the Tata Iron and Steel Co., the Labour Association is financially in very bad condition. If the present condition continues, I am afraid that the Labour Association will have to close down and in that contingency, the workers of Jamshedpur will be left without a friend or guide.[62]

The Labour Association was only marginally involved in the collision between the company and the Labour Federation. It was not indifferent however to the possibility that if the company eliminated the Federation the way would be clear for the Association to emerge as the sole representative of the Jamshedpur workers. But in thinking this they miscalculated. What they did not take into consideration was the deep loyalty of a solid core of production workers to Homi's personal leadership and to the Federation. They did not realize the difficulties of expanding their base once they allowed the Association to become representative of only a few workers, located in a narrow strata of the work force, and drawn heavily from one linguistic group. The Labour Association activists failed to develop a program which incorporated the militancy the workers demanded and needed or to convince the workers that the path of negotiation was in their best interests. Neither of the two unions had really attempted to give any *educational* leadership to their followers, but at least the Federation had acted openly and in a convincingly militant way. What the Association won, it won because it was connected with the political movement, because it was often collaborationist, or because it suited the pragmatic strategy of the company to concede something to the Association to build it at the expense of the Federation.

Bose came to realize this on his return and tried to rise above the contradiction which he had helped to develop and sustain. Speaking at a rally on January 11, 1931 he stated:

> Since my release from jail I have been thinking to pay a visit to Jamshedpur but considering the split among the workers I hesitated because I thought it was not the time for me to render you any service. Now, when I came to understand that you have all realized the difficulty of the split, I have come . . . You have got here one Association and one Federation and I am not interested with

> any of these. What I want is that you should be united and form one strong union; . . . . I do not wish to occupy any post in your union. I shall be glad to serve as an outside man.[63]

A compromise committee was organized but the sources of division were still fresh and there were greater obstacles than the very real need for unity could overcome. The unions remained divided and the Labour Association learned its last political lesson: that once the company had managed to eliminate its most persistent enemy it would turn on the Association itself. On September 20, 1931 Bose's meeting was attacked by an armed gang which Bose alleged was in the pay of the company[64] and declared that "It is now clear that after Mr. Homi's imprisonment the Company are trying their level best to crush Labour once and for all."[65]

Bose sought to sustain the trade union movement and unite the workers but failed; this was partially due to the limited time he could devote to Jamshedpur affairs and partially because he had become identified with the very conditions responsible for division. Although Bose maintained some connection with Jamshedpur labor for many years he was never again to exercise leadership there. Divided and fragmented, Jamshedpur labor remained quiescent for a short period after which it was once again to exercise its collective strength.

CONCLUSION

The 1928 strike and its aftermath illustrates both the possibilities of transcending regional loyalties and the very real obstacles these loyalties present. In the strike movement itself, regionalism was capable of being submerged in the broader struggle, although not always without difficulty. The Bengali workers represent a more complex exception. Leadership of the community was not homogenous but at the time of the strike the dominant leaderships were both inimical to the conflict. These leaderships were located on the one hand in the Vivekananda Society and exercised through a high officer of the company who was also TISCO's nominee to the Labour Association's Executive Committee, and, on the other, in the Labour Association itself.

The withholding of support for the strike by a large proportion of Bengalis cannot be attributed to anything inherent in "regional chauvinism." That kind of reasoning would be oversimplistic. The leadership of the company's Land Officer within the Bengali community was clearly used to develop pro-company policies -- he was, in short, a company agent. Bengali adherence to the Labour Association also admits of some explanation based on other than regional chauvinism. Bengalis, and to a lesser extent Madrassis, dominated the clerical and minor supervisory positions in the company. They also composed the "intelligentsis" of the town and were among its first groups to manifest either a grade union or political consciousness. There is no indication, however, that their moral or political authority was widely accepted. Hence, some antipathy to the Bengalis as a group may be attributed to the antipathy of the labor engaged directly in production to the clerical and technical force as a whole. There are strong indications that the relative monopoly of this group over clerical positions and tasks requiring literacy was resented because it was exercised in collaboration with management and also used in a socially patronizing way.

When Bose and his lieutenants persuaded the Bengali workers to join the strike, they implicitly reinforced the divisions by making their appeal on the basis of the Bengal identification ("Bengali nationalism") rather than on the basis of a "class line." This allowed for unification for the immediate purpose of consolidating the strikers but it reinforced the regionalist tendencies already too evident in the work force. This reinforcement of the Bengali identification seems to have contributed in no small way to Bose's ineffectiveness in broadening the base of the Labour Association after he became the union's President. In fact, it may be concluded that the consciousness of the Jamshedpur workers, to the extent that it was nationalist, admitted of many "nationalisms' rather than one monolithic Indian nationalism. If this is true, then Bose became more of a Bengali anti-imperialist than a 'national' figure -- when perceived through the eyes of Jamshedpur's heterogeneous work force.

Bose's role in the Jamshedpur labor movement also illustrates the very great difficulties facing a nationalist movement trying to draw support from a variety of classes. Although Bose would not have conceived of himself as a class collaborator, he can be effectively understood as a *mediator*. Although he took the leadership role both in settling the strike and within the Labour Association, he did not act as if the conflict between labor and national capital admitted of irreconcilable differences. He attempted to straddle these differences and therefore satisfied neither group, much like his predecessor from Santi Niketan, C. F. Andrews.

As much as Bose may have been convinced that Homi was a self-server and an opportunist, he was also aware Homi represented a militant alternative to mediational conflict resolution. He sensed that the encouragement of militant action and preaching of class hatred would make it impossible to achieve the goal of building an alliance between 'patriotic' capitalists and the underclasses -- a strategy which Congress developed from 1920, to independence. Although Bose was somewhat to the 'left' of many of his Congress confederates, objectively his position was little different from that enunciated by Lala Lajpat Rai or Motilal Nehru.

With respect to TISCO, the concerns of the Congress leaders were substantially different from that of the workers. Their primary interest was the 'Indianization' of the firm and the phasing out of European and American covenanted officers. They took great pride in the national character of the steel industry while at the same time the workers' experiences demonstrated that national industry was not qualitatively different from that of foreigners in dealing with workers' demands or in the attitude taken to trade unions.

There is a compelling conclusion that can be drawn from the events which is quite clear, whatever profundity it may lack. Congress (nationalist) politicians and workers' organizations meet in the arena of labor conflict for mutual, but not necessarily similar, advantage. In the absence of militant leadership which is an exclusive partisan of the working class, workers enter industrial conflict primarily in pursuit of economic demands. In the process of conflict and crisis they seek out some prominent politician to support that struggle. The leader brings a certain expertise in articulation of demands and negotiation and acts as a political symbol, enhancing the importance and public significance of the particular struggle hoping the conflict will receive public approval and

coerce the company to bend to public sentiments. Perhaps the workers' sense of isolation is also dispelled, especially if the public is mobilized to support their efforts.

While some humanitarian interest in the workers' struggles may be attributed to the Congress politicians, the primary motive for participation is to add to the accumulation of divergent groups and classes which constitute the nationalist bloc. The strength of this bloc is considerably affected by the depth of the nationalist penetration into the various classes of the society in both qualitative and quantitative terms. The nationalist movement continually strives for a sociological majority under its ideological hegemony. However, although the nationalist leadership and the labor movement may find a mutual advantage in combining at particular times, collaboration also gives rise to contradictions, some of which I have tried to describe.

FOOTNOTES

1. For a good general theoretical statement on the colonial (and imperial) situation, see G. Balandier, "La Situation Coloniale: Approche Theorique," *Cahiers Internationaux de sociologie*, XI (1951), 44-79. On the various perspectives of the role of nationalism in states emergent from colonial and imperial systems, see K. H. Silvert (ed.), *Expectant Peoples: Nationalism and Development* (New York: Random House, 1963). In no political formations has the question of nationalism and the relation to it of the various class forces than the communist parties. Much of the history of the Communist International and the individual Asian, African and Latin American parties has been that of a search for a strategy which combines anti-imperialism with anti-capitalism.

2. For the purposes of this paper I use "nationalist movement" and "Indian National Congress" interchangeably.

3. This paper is based on research done on the Tata Iron and Steel Company and the industrial complex of Jamshedpur, Bihar undertaken at various times over the past few years. Fieldwork was first begun as a research assistant to Michael M. Ames, Associate Professor of Anthropology, The University of British Columbia, in 1967-68. Further research was done throughout late 1970 through 1972 in preparation of the doctoral dissertation to be submitted to the Department of Political Science, Duke University. Research was undertaken in Jamshedpur, Calcutta, New Delhi and Bombay in India; at the School of Oriental and African Studies and the India Office Library and Records in London; and at Duke University. The dissertation is entitled: *Managers and Mazdoors: A Case Study of the Relationship of Industrial Conflict and Politics in an Indian Steel Town.*

4. Oscar A. Ornati, *Jobs and Workers in India* (Ithaca: The Institute of International Industrial Relations, Cornell University, 1955), 108-109. The connection is also stressed by a large number of Indian historians and writers on Indian labor, cf. P. P. Laksman, *Congress and Labour Movement in India* (Allahabad: Economic and Political Research Department, All-India Congress Committee, 1947).

5. Kanji Dwarkadas, *Forty-five Years with Labour* (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1962), 21. The All-India Trade Union Congress was formed in Bombay in October, 1920. Its first sesseion was presided over by Lala Lajpat Rai who was then also the President of the Indian National Congress.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

7. Material on the Tata Iron and Steel Co., Ltd. was collected while engaging in doctoral research in Jamshedpur from December, 1970 to June, 1972. For general works see: Verrier Elwin, *The Story of Tata Steel* (Bombay: TISCO, 1958); Frank Harris, *Jamsetji Nusserwanji Tata: A Chronicle of His Life* (Bombay: Blackie and Son, 1958); and B. R. Misra, *Report on Socio-Economic Survey of Jamshedpur City* (Patna: Patna University Press, 1959).

8. *Interviews;* also an analysis of the employment and officer rolls of the company at the time being dealt with in this paper. Material was also noted from the notes and preparation document for the Tata submission to the Royal Commission on Labour (Whitley Commission), 1929.

9. On the relation of conflict and labor discipline see Morris David Morris, *The Emergence of an Industrial Labor Force in India: A Study of the Bombay Cotton Mills, 1854-1947* (Bombay: Oxford University Press, 1965), 1-9. The earliest study of the problem with respect to TISCO was a study undertaken by Dr. Mann of the Poona Agricultural Institute for the Sakchi Social Welfare Committee in London. Cf. Harold H. Mann, *Report on Investigations with Regard to Social Welfare Work at Jamshedpur* (Poona: TISCO, 1919).

10. TISCO's first venture into Social Welfare policy was begun in 1918 under the initiative of B. J. Padshah. A committee was formed in London under the auspices of the company and chaired by Sidney Webb. Among the members were Sir Ralph Ashton, Professors Hobhouse and Urwick, Beatrice Webb, D. T. Chadwick and H. Treble. Article in preparation: Eduard M. Lavalle, *Early Perspectives on Urban Community Development in India: Tata and Social Engineering at Sakchi* (in preparation).

11. Mann, *ibid.*

12. Moni Ghosh, *Our Struggle: A Short History of Trade Union Movement in Tisco Industry at Jamshedpur* (Calcutta: Das Gupta and Co., 1959). An interesting memoir with a terribly strong bias in favor of the Congress and the INTUC and serious historical errors.

13. *Statesman*, March 18, 1920. The order to fire was given by the local magistrate S. K. Sawday who was also the Town Administrator of the company. Sawday had previously tried to break the strike by running a shunting locomotive through a cordon of obstructing workers trying to discourage strikebreaking.

14. *Interviews* and correspondence. A note is in order on material sources for much of this paper. I have combined several methods. Much of the material comes from interviews and oral histories taken from activists engaged in the events described. Interviews and oral histories were check and verified by several sources of documentation, some confidential and some of an archival nature. Also, a survey of the Indian press from 1908 to 1971 was made. I have thus attempted to build a social history in which each material fact is checked and verified from several sources. Documentation is footnoted only when it is not confidential and when it is a direct quotation from a source.

15. "Some notes taken at the meeting of the Conciliation Committee held at Jamshedpur on 20th August 1924," *File 16: Jamshedpur Labour Situation: Conciliation Committee*, Tata Iron and Steel Co. (Bombay), p. 20.

16. M. K. Gandhi, *Collected Works of Mahatam Gandhi*, Vol. XXVII (New Delhi: Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, 1965).

17. *Ibid.*

18. TISCO, *Review of events leading up to the notice that works will be closed until further notice on 1/6/28* (Jamshedpur: General Office, typescript dated June 19, 1928, p. 4.

19. *Ibid.*

20. Maneck Homi, *Representations of M. Homi, B.A., LL.B., Associate Member, American Iron & Steel Institute, N.Y., U.S.A., to the Indian Tariff Board* (Typescript; 1923). Also, interviews with company officers, N. K. Sane, M. Homi and review of correspondence.

21. *Interviews.*

22. *Interviews.* Sarcar was one of the leaders of the strike at Lilooah which lasted nearly 120 days. Chetty (or Chettiar) was an early communist who worked with Roy and at one time worked within the Congress as well. In 1922 he formed the Labor and Kisan Party in Madras.

23. *Evening News of India*, May 5, 1928.

24. "The number of industrial disputes in the year was 203 as against 128 of 1926 and 129 of 1927. The number of workers involved was 5,06,851 as against 1,86,811 and 1,31,655 of the two earlier years." V. B. Karnik, *Indian Trade Unions: A Survey* (Bombay: Manktalas, 1968), 57. This period of great industrial agitation was largely the result of the militant leadership of the communists who had embarked on a strong thrust into the industrial sector and were very active in organizing unions.

25. *Times of India*, June 9, 1928; especially the editorial.

26. *Forward*, July 1, 1928.

27. *TISCO Bulletin*, July 14, 1928; *Times of India*, July 17, 1928.

28. *Interviews*.

29. *Letter*, H. K. Briscoe, Chief Secretary, Government of Bihar, Special Section to Tata Sons, Ltd., dated July 7, 1928.

30. *Ibid.*

31. *Kaiser-i-Hind*, July 5, 1928. Correspondence between Meesrs. Bharucha and M. Homi. Also *Kaiser-i-Hind*, July 29, 1928.

32. *Ibid.*

33. *Interview.*

34. *Telegrams:* Bose to Samaldas, August 18, 1928; Bose to Saklatvala, Aug. 17, 1928; Saklatvala to Bose, August 18, 1928; Mather to Alexander, August 17, 1928. Bose had previously sent two of his lieutenants to report on the situation.

35. *Telegram*, August 19, 1928. Alexander to Mather.

36. *Ibid.*

37. *Letter*, Gaganvihari L. Mehta to Lalu Kaka, August 21, 1928.

38. *Ibid.* Substantiated by interview.

39. TISCO, *Terms of Settlement*, September 12, 1928.

40. *Ibid.*, clause 5.

41. *Times of India*, September 15, 1928. Also, *interviews*.

42. *Letter*, Alexander to Peterson, dated November 11, 1928.

43. Letter to the *Indian Daily Mail*, Bose, dated October 19, 1928.

44. *Ibid.*

45. *Letter*, Bose to Saklatvala, dated November 12, 1928.

46. *Letter*, Bose to Alexander, dated October 29, 1928.

47. *Ibid.*

48. *Extract from the Report of the Inspector, Labour Intelligence Bureau* (Typescript; dated January 27, 1930). Authenticated by interview.

49. *Bulletin*, Labour Federation, dated December 5, 1928.

50. *Bulletin*, Labour Association, dated November 11, 1928.

51. *Letter*, Alexander to Peterson, February 4, 1929.

52. Lavalle, *ibid.*

53. The "associated companies" are companies which subsequently were established at Jamshedpur. Some of these companies, such as Tinplate Company of India were independent companies and some were subsidiaries of the Tata Iron and Steel Company and were sub-lessees of TISCO.

54. For a short history of the Tinplate Co. cf. Townend, Sir Harry, *The Tinplate Company of India Limited, Jamshedpur: A History from its Inception to 1961/62* (Calcutta: mimeo; n.d.).

55. J. R. Dain, *Report made by Mr. J. R. Dain, I. C. S., Commissioner, Chota Nagpur Division on the situation at the Tinplate Works.* (Jamshedpur: typescript, dated May 25, 1929). Also, correspondence and interviews.

56. Townend, *ibid.*, p. 7. *Interview.*

57. *Bulletin*, Labour Federation, December 27, 1929. In reply to the Labour Association's claim that it was "dying to serve the workers" the Federation leaflet replied: "The Labour Association can serve Labour only when it dies."

58. *Bulletin*, Labour Federation, n.d.

59. *Note by J. P. K. Peterson* (Bombay: Tisco, April 10, 1929.

60. Eduard M. Lavalle, *Pre-Industrial and Industrial Elite Co-operation for the Containment of Socio-Economic Conflict* (Paper prepared for the conference "Realm and Region in Traditional India," held at Duke University, Durham, North Carolina, April 13-15, 1973.).

61. *Ibid.* This paper gives an extensive list of the court cases in which the Federationists were involved.

62. *Bulletin*, Labour Association, October 28, 1930.

63. *Transcript of an address to a meeting held on January 11, 1931.* Jamshedpur: Labour Bureau, n.d.

64. *Interviews.* Also, see *Statesman*, September 23, 1931.

65. *Bulletin*, Labour Association, September 21, 1931.

XII. NEW TRENDS IN INDIAN PLANNING: CALCUTTA AS A CASE STUDY

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A. INTRODUCTION

For years now Calcutta has become synonymous in people's minds with failure -- on the planners' part to deal with the problems of primary cities in the so-called developing countries and to most others, the prime example of massive over-population and squalor. The outside international team, for instance, that met in Calcutta to discuss its future in January, 1967, spoke in their final roundup statement in the seminar in a manner that one has since become accustomed to hearing from most people when speaking about Calcutta:

> We have never seen human degradation on a comparable scale in any other city in the world. This is the matter of one of the greatest urban concentrations in existence rapidly reaching a point of breakdown ... [and] if this final breakdown were to take place, it would be a disaster for mankind of a more sinister sort than any disaster of flood or famine.[1]

A somewhat similar feeling can be seen in a statement by the then Indian Prime Minister, Pandit Nehru, in 1961, the year of the first organized attempts to deal with the problems of Calcutta in planning terms, when he spoke of "the disaster for India if Calcutta was to go to pieces."[2] And as late as 1972, an eminent Indian, albeit not a planner, or for that matter a politician, was still arguing that town planning in Calcutta was "intractable," and suggested that the "cynics," and he seemed to include himself, have only one solution for Calcutta -- "burn it."[3]

But the fact remains that Calcutta cannot be ignored. As Nehru saw, its position as India's largest city places its problems and future in the context of India as a whole; and recent political developments with the creation of Bangladesh have added a new strategic importance both to Calcutta's position as the primary city in Eastern India and to her future well-being. Added to this is that the dismissal of Calcutta as an intractable problem is no answer to solving its problems either now or in the future. For Calcutta is not only today a major and vital problem in terms of its conditions, but it will become a far greater problem in the future. If the population of the Calcutta Metropolitan District[4] was 8.3 million in 1971, this is anticipated to increase to 12.5 million by 1986.[5] And if the city is already unable to cope with its present population problems, it is even less likely to be able to deal with this projected 4.2 million or 66% increase in the next twenty years. And by 1991, it is estimated that the Calcutta Metropolitan District will be the biggest metropolis west of Tokyo as far as Cairo, whether in terms of population or area, and that "if nothing else, this [condition] becomes a sheer human problem."[6]

But to emphasize the negative side of the inevitable growth of Calcutta is to ignore far more positive developments that have been taking place in Calcutta and its metropolitan region in the last three years. It is also to ignore the whole field of planning in India in the last decade. If Calcutta was the first attempt at large-scale planning in India,[7] it has now been followed by a growing number of others,[8] each building on the mistakes and experiences of other plans, and, perhaps what is more important, creating a particularly Indian approach to Indian planning problems that in the long run seems far more likely to deal with the innumerable problems, both administrative and cultural, that shape successful planning in any country, but particularly in a developing one. And for all the pessimism about Calcutta that has left it relegated to the realms of the impossible, there are signs that, given certain political and economical conditions allowing for a certain stability of development in the next four years, there is the possibility at last that Calcutta's problems can now to some extent be realistically met.

It is the purpose of this paper to argue that in the last decade there has been a notable change and progression in planning in India, a change from what might be termed a colonial pattern to one that is Indian in character and direction. And that this change is of vital importance to India's future in dealing with her urban and regional problems, problems which can be seen particularly clearly in Calcutta. It is the first, and in many ways an innovative, attempt to plan on a large scale in India and an attempt that perhaps undeliberately at first has come to mark this new trend of Indian homogeneous planning.

Calcutta was not only the first large-scale attempt to apply town and metropolitan planning, but it also has a considerable array of basic and first-hand sources available for analysis (most of which will be used in this paper)[9] and also offers, with its peculiar position of being the primary city in Eastern India with a vast economic hinterland and a long and tempestuous political history, an interesting example of the travails of planning on any scale and in particular on a micro scale, in India and in a developing country.

After examining the initially peculiar problems and the history and development of planning of Calcutta that planners have had to face with respect to that city (Section B), I then look at the implementation of these plans (Section C), and the economic and political variables that affect their implementation (Sections D and E), and finally, in conclusion (Section F), examine both the possible future of Calcutta and the growth and importance of what I term this peculiarly new Indian approach to planning.

B. HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF PLANNING IN CALCUTTA

Like most large cities, Calcutta has problems peculiar to it that both impede and help development. In Calcutta's case, one of the prime factors in her rapid growth and resulting over-urbanization has been the physical aspects of her environment. As the 1966 Master Plan put it, "few more unlikely and unpromising locations" could have developed as one of "the world's largest concentrations of urban population."[10] Originally a flat swamp interspersed with patches of jungle,[11] Calcutta grew up on both sides of the Hooghly, but unlike other river cities such as London or Paris, growth was limited by the physical topography of the surrounding areas. From the beginning Calcutta was unable

to radiate out as it grew, since the low-lying marshy grounds on both sides of the river confined growth. The result was a historical pattern of development that grew linearly along the banks of the river some fifty miles from Kalyani in the northeast and Uluberia in the southwest.

But if surrounding low level swamplands inhibited the expansion outwards, the very river banks, with the attraction of easy transportation, both as the access to the deep water port and to and from the hinterlands, led to rapid growth along the river banks. This can be seen not surprisingly with the jute industry's development in the late 19th and early 20th centures, when the present chain of jute mills grew up particularly on the east bank, due to their closeness to the primary jute growing areas of East Bengal. On the west bank, the development of rail communications and the location of coalfields and steel production in the northwest resulted in the heavy concentration of engineering industries in Howrah.

The importance of the physical restraints of this imposed growth pattern can be seen from the fact that of the 433 square miles of the Calcutta Metropolitan District (including inland water ways and the river itself), only 135.7 miles, or 31%, is developed land. The result is that today's population of 8.5 million is literally squeezed into this physically confined space. Since 1961 the amount of reclaimed land has grown, but it has lagged far behind the pace of population growth, even up to 1971, and there is little likelihood of reclamation even beginning to meet the demand in the future.

The second main factor in the pressue on Calcutta is her primary city position in relation to the hinterland. With a vast hinterland with a population of over 150 million, Calcutta has emerged as the one major urbanized center for Eastern India. For of India's five census zones, the Eastern zone is the least urbanized.

But if that hinterland is underdeveloped in one sense, it is richly endowed with natural resources. The abundant supplies of coal in West Bengal and Bihar and the other mineral deposits in these states and in Orissa have led to the development of today's great iron and steel complexes, and with them growing concentrations of anxillary engineering industries. Added to this is the more traditional tea of East Bengal and Assam, and jute from both these states and Bihar. Oil in Assam and forest products in both that state and West Bengal all add up to making Calcutta a rich and vital centre for India's economic well being. Not surprisingly, as Table 1 below shows, Calcutta has become, with Bombay, a main business center of India.

TABLE 1. Number of Joint Stock Companies in the Tertiary Sector and Their Paid-Up Capital in West Bengal as Percentages of All-India Figures, 1961-62

Activity	% of All-India Number	% of All-India Paid-Up Capital
1 Commerce (trade and finance)	34.9	32.6
Trade (wholesale and retail)	39.1	42.1
Real estate companies and similar organizations (excluding agricultural land)	64.3	53.5
Insurance companies	33.3	12.5
Banking, and other financial institutions	16.7	21.5
II Transport, Communications and Storage	18.3	13.1
Transport by water	50.9	8.6
Railway transport	78.6	79.1
Transport by road	10.8	10.0
III Community and Business Service	52.2	46.0
IV Personal and Other Services	31.8	25.0

SOURCE: Central Statistical Organization, Government of India. Statistical Abstract of the Indian Union, 1963 and 1964.

As a result, tremendous pressures have been placed on Calcutta, not only to provide services for this vast area, but to absorb and provide services for the ever-increasing population. According to the 1961 census,[14] more than 42% of the urban population of West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and Assam lives in the cities and towns of the Calcutta Metropolitan District, in a single narrow strip of 200 square miles along both sides of the River Hooghly. Because of this imbalance in urbanization patterns, the migration rate from the hinterland into the Calcutta Metropolitan District has been too heavy. It is estimated that by 1986 the population of the Calcutta Metropolitan District will rise from the present 8.3 million to about 12.5 million.[15]

This continuous inflow of migrants has added to the existing problems of Calcutta and is incessantly straining its inadequate housing, transport, water, education and employment facilities. Many of these migrants have continued to remain as outsiders, sleeping on the pavements or huddled in male "messing families" in ramshackle bustee huts in conditions of appalling sanitation, or living or sleeping inside shops, offices, hotels, docks, factories, or construction sites. More importantly, perhaps, is that they have little stake in the city as such and little concern for any civic progress or civic pride.

Though many of these immigrants earn a living in the city, they continue to send whatever parts of their earnings they can in small monthly remittances to their village homes. According to one estimate,[16] the city sends out annually about Rs. 28 million through very small postal remittances; the savings of small men without bank accounts sweating away to keep their families alive in villages.

An especially noticeable feature of the immigration is that about 30% of the incoming population during the 1951-61 period came from East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) as refugees due to political pressure.

The present annual volume of population growth through natural increase in the Calcutta Metropolitan District as a whole is 165,000, and annual net influx of migrants is about 58,000 -- making a total population increase of over 200,000 per year. This rate of population growth has long outstripped, needless to say, the rate of development of a satisfactory urban environment, both for living and working purposes.

Not surprisingly, with this vast influx of migrants, housing is a major problem in Calcutta. According to 1961 census figures, 6,325,000 persons resided in 1,329,000 housing units, which provided on an average one unit for every 7.76 persons. Of these 1,329,000 units, only 437,000 units had permanent walls. About 366,000 were housed in institutions of one type or another (hospitals, colleges, jails, etc.). At least another 300,000 had no housing at all and represented the pavement dwellers of Calcutta. The situation has certainly grown worse in the last decade.

In terms of transport, traffic congestion and inadequate transport facilities in Calcutta, the figures in 1966 attest, were just as bad. The existing numbers of state and private buses and trams are woefully inadequate for the 302 million passengers flowing through Calcutta in a year, resulting in gross overloading of buses and trams. More than 315,000 transit passengers cross the Howrah Bridge by bus or tram and there are numerous other travel corridors in the city where transit passenger volumes exceed 150,000 daily. More than 200,000 passengers arrive at and depart daily from each of two main railway stations serving suburban commuters -- Howrah and Sealdah.

Besides these, the Calcutta Metropolitan District suffers from other inherent physical difficulties. The street and the highway systems of the Calcutta Metropolitan District have been influenced by the linear pattern of growth of the District along two banks of the Hooghly. Thus, the river bisects the Calcutta Metropolitan District and provides a great internal barrier

to road and rail communications. And as a result, the entire Metropolitan District has only two narrow corridors for movement, the Barrackpore Trunk Road on the east and Grand Trunk Road, on the west. The second provides the only link with Asansol-Durgapur industrial belt and the northern and western sectors of the Calcutta hinterland.

In the 53 miles of the river between Kalyani in the north and Budge Budge in the south, there are only two points where the traffic can cross the river. Thus the strain on the Howrah Bridge, linking the twin cities of Calcutta and Howrah in the heart of the Metropolitan District is consequently very severe.

In terms of services, the overpopulation is also felt in sewage and water supply. The extremely flat topography of the Calcutta Metropolitan District, with its maximum elevation of about 30 feet above sea-level, has made sewage and drainage problems difficult. By far the greater part of the existing urban areas of the Calcutta Metropolitan District has neither a satisfactory drainage nor a safe sewage system. Only 54% of Calcutta's corporation area is sewered. Howrah has no sewage system at all, nor does any municipality throughout the Calcutta Metropolitan District -- with a few minor exceptions.

Even where sewage systems prevail, as in parts of Calcutta City, due to heavy silting of the sewers and want of maintenance, in every monsoon after heavy rainfall the streets are quickly flooded, water stands knee-deep, traffic and commerce are paralyzed -- all adding to the miseries of life throughout the city.[17]

The inadequacy of urban services is best illustrated with deteriorating supply of water for Calcutta. Between 1931 and 1965, the per capita supply of filtered water declined from 52.3 gallons a day to 28 gallons. There was also simultaneous and substantial decline in the per capita availability of unfiltered water. Due to acute scarcity of filtered water, considerable use is also made in bustees of the unfiltered water supply of 90 million gallons per day in the Calcutta Corporation area for washing and drinking, though the supply in 1958-59 and later showed the presence of cholera vibrio in 5% of the samples taken.

In other areas of the Calcutta Metropolitan District outside the Calcutta Corporation, the supply of filtered water is inadequate, since except for a few cases there is no filtered supply at all. Excluding Calcutta Corporation, the remaining two corporations and 31 municipalities in the Calcutta Metropolitan District with total population of over 2 million, have an average total public supply of water of only 12.3 gallons per capita per day. The remainder of the Calcutta Metropolitan District, with a population of 1.7 million, has no public water supply system at all.

Apart from this list of inhibiting restrictions of metropolitan living in Calcutta, there is one further problem of major importance. This is the rapid silting up of the Hooghly River in recent years that has adversely affected this vital port which even today exports an estimated 43% of India's total exports by sea.[18]

With a deposition of 900 to 100 million cubic feet of silt annually in the river bed of Hooghly, the navigation channel of the river is fast blocking up, drastically curtailing the port facilities. This has resulted in a reduction of the number and size of vessels that can use this major port and in continual and costly dredging operations in a losing battle to keep the port open. Ships entering or leaving Calcutta Port have to cross no less than fifteen sand bars, eleven of which are upstream of Diamond Harbor.

Ships bigger than 10,000 tons with drafts of over 25 feet have virtually no chance to enter the Port of Calcutta at all. Deep-draft ships have to plan their voyages timing their movements with tides.

The silting of the Hooghly, besides crippling Calcutta Port, poses a very serious threat to the water supply of the whole of the Metropolitan District. The salinity of the river water has been gradually increasing until as far back as 1959 its salt content had already reached 2,480 PPM (the generally accepted drinking water tolerance is 250 PPM of cholorides).[19]

To meet these conditions which in the late 1960's still existed and were growing, little was done until the setting up of the Calcutta Metropolitan Planning Organization in 1961, with the help of the West Bengal government and the Ford Foundation. Its creation had not been stimulated by any sudden national awareness of the need for planning. For India had long after Independence relied on the colonial past and the English engineers and architects had seen little use of planners or their training.[20] Although, for instance, the first school of architecture in India came into existence in the 1920's,[21] it was only with the building of Nehru's Chandigargh[22] that planning came into university curricula and Indian planners started to emerge onto the scene. As Nehru said, "The significant thing about Chandigarh is not the fact that you like it ... but that it has made you aware that modern architecture exists."[23]

In Calcutta, the first steps on creating India's first formal urban planning body as such -- the Calcutta Metropolitan Planning Organization -- were stimulated by the 1960 World Health Organization Mission's report on the need for a massive environmental improvement program for the Calcutta Metropolitan Area, which after the 1958 epidemic, had come to be regarded as one of the capitals of endemic cholera in Southern Asia. After five years of research and surveys, the Calcutta Metropolitan Planning Organization brought forth the Basic Development Plan for the Calcutta Metropolitan District 1966-86.

In essence, the Basic Development Plan, however, was not a land-use plan or a Master Plan for zoning and sub-division. (And in this it marked the beginnings of the new school of planning in India -- characterized by its emphasis on working within existing conditions and in an 'Indian' way). The Plan was more an identification and a suggestion for remedial action to meet the massive deficiencies in the infrastructure of the Metropolitan District which had assumed a crippling effect on its economy and growth.

The tasks which the Calcutta Metropolitan Planning Organization set for itself in the Calcutta situation were essentially three: arrest of deterioration, better use of existing capacity, and provision for new growth. Basically, therefore, the program was for improvement of basic infrastructure services, such as water supply, drainage, slum improvement, traffic and transportation. These were shaped in a capital works program with necessary capital

budgeting and programming. The wider issues of economic development, spatial growth, and urban renewal were the subject of broad recommendations to the state government, which assigned to them their separate priorities. While this was not an ideal approach, the basic presumption was that although massive governmental action in these wider fields was hoped for, its absence need not affect a minimum environmental improvement program affecting the lives of the millions living in the metropolis.

By 1966, the Calcutta Metropolitan Planning Organization was ready with an action program involving a capital outlay of 150 crores of rupees. But it was not until May, 1970, that a revised and enlarged program of another 100 crores was approved.

By 1970, the development was well under way, but new sets of difficulties were yet to be overcome. For to meet the needs of implementation, preparation of engineering details, scrutinizing and sanctioning of schemes, organizational readiness, availability of raw materials, land acquisition, etc., was a complicated task.

An executive authority, the Calcutta Metropolitan Development Authority, had to be set up, and this was done in September, 1970. The function of the Calcutta Metropolitan Development Authority is to implement rather than to formulate plans. And from its inauguration it set out to implement a wide range of projects with the immediate aim of "arresting further deterioration."[24]

It met its financial requirements, estimated at Rs. 150 crores for the period 1969-73, by adding to the Rs. 42.88 crores allocated by the center in the Four-Year Plan (1969-73), an additional Rs. 107 crores raised partly by an ingenious octroi tax introduced by the Taxes on Entry of Goods into Metropolitan Area Act of August, 1970, that went into effect on November 1 of that year. So successful was this tax (producing Rs. 10.14 crores a year in place of the anticipated 8 crores) that the Calcutta Metropolitan Development Authority, with an added special loan from the state government of 5 crores a year, found itself with nearly the anticipated 150 crores for implementation. As the table below shows, the resources estimated for the Fourth Plan Period (1969-74) amount to Rs. 112.88 crores, which, allowing for the fact that 'savings from entry tax' is shown here as an annual figure, means a final total around Rs. 160 crores.[25] The result has been a widespread number of projects of which the 36 major ones are listed in Appendix III.

TABLE 2: CALCUTTA METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY RESOURCES

from State Plan	42.88 crores
from Market Borrowings	30.00 crores
savings from Entry Tax	12.00 crores
Special Central Loan	20.00 crores
Grant for Bustee Improvement Programme	8.00 crores
TOTAL	112.88 crores

Source: K. C. Sivaramakrishnan, *Organizing a Metropolitan Programme: The Calcutta Case.*

In addition to these 'maintenance projects,' which are a definite sign of action at last on the Calcutta scene, three major projects have been started in the last 18 months to meet the ever-growing transport needs of the city.

The first is the much publicized (in the Indian press at least) Calcutta Rapid Transit System. After the unsuccessful wooing of a number of countries including the United Kingdom and Canada as possible consultants, the centrally funded[26] Rs. 140.3 crore, 165 kilometre underground was finally started with the help of Russian expert assistance in November 1972. Running from Tollygung in the south to Dum Dum in the north, it is ultimately estimated to provide services for 1.3 million passengers at peak hours, initially reaching 1.7 million when it comes into full operation in the 1980's.[27]

The second major step in improving transportation is the construction of a second major bridge across the Hooghly at Kalyani, where the foundation stone was laid in 1972. In addition, other bridges are scheduled for construction at Tolly's Nullah and Chetla.

And finally, a major step has been taken to improve the condition of the existing port and in getting the new port at Haldia with its ancillary industrial complexes. The problem of the massive silting up of the Hooghly that was mentioned earlier and which had made the present major Calcutta port more and more ineffective in recent years, may be solved by the ambitious construction of the Farakkah Barrage some 100 miles up-river, which will divert water at the rate of 40,000 cusees a day for some 300 days a year.[28] Already in operation, this is anticipated to reverse the inward silt flow and put the old port back into operation within three years.

Of the other improvements, a major innovation has been made with the decision to improve rather than close, as has been the traditional method, the famed slum areas or 'bustees.' By giving the occupants rights of ownership of bustee land, building latrines at the rate of one for every thirty people, providing drinkable water, pathways, drainage and street lighting, it is hoped that this slum improvement will be both a functional operation and, more importantly, one that will turn an appalling slum into a self-contained and perhaps consciously self-improving community.

But planning and improvement is one thing that an overheavy and unwieldy administration can hold back or delay. And the diverse nature of the municipal organization of Calcutta at the moment is a major, though not insurmountable, obstacle. The main problem is whether the city can, after this initial burst of maintenance, "amortize the costs of its development." As anyone who knows Calcutta, with its incredibly splintered local authority framework, can see, this is a major question. For with the metropolitan area presently split into 97 different urban areas (excluding suburban areas), and none of these having a satisfactory tax base, likely revenues are small. It had been recommended that these 97 units be merged into six or seven groups, or, alternatively, that a single tier structure analogous to the Greater Bombay area be set up. But until either this is done or other reasonable and income-producing alternatives are found, this will be one of the major problems facing the Calcutta Metropolitan Development Authority after 1976.

Thus in purely planning terms, it can be seen that at last some concentrated effort is being made to cope with the internal problems of meeting the amassed problems of the Calcutta Metropolitan District caused by the immense over-urbanization in the last twenty years. The administrative structure now exists in the form of the Calcutta Metropolitan Development Authority, backed up by the planning arm of the Calcutta Metropolitan Planning Organization, and funding is being raised and is being utilized both for the present and for the foreseeable future. This alone is a major innovation after years of frustration and delay, and if (and it is an important if) an internal reorganization of the municipal structure as suggested can be achieved to follow up and extend the present work beyond its primary maintenance character of the moment, then the outlook for the future is brighter than many realize.

Added to this are the major innovations in transport that will not only increase the efficiency of the city but of its vital port facilities as well. It is estimated that the newly built second Calcutta port at Haldia will begin operations next year, and the Farakkah Barrage scheme is now under implementation, with the result that the old port may once again become fully serviceable with the desilting in the next few years. Already responsible for 43% of Indian sea exports, these two ports working at reasonable efficiency levels may not only be able to cope with the present massive inflow of goods from Calcutta's hinterland, but be able to cope with the anticipated growth.

In the city, the new rapid transit system (one of the four envisaged under the Fifth Five-Year Plan for India)[29] and the second bridge across the Hooghly both add to the easing of internal transportation strain.

But whatever improvements are made in Calcutta proper, and in the Calcutta Metropolitan District, the economic and urban future of Calcutta as a city depends on two other vitally important factors, those of the economic growth of the city and of the region and of some sort of future political stability in West Bengal that will allow (and which it has so often disrupted in the past) the development of both city and region.

C. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF CALCUTTA AND ITS HINTERLAND

It has already been emphasized earlier in this paper that Calcutta suffered both from physical limitations on its own development as a city and from its position as primary city in an enormous hinterland covering the whole of Eastern India.

Calcutta dwarfs any other urban agglomeration. Out of the four states of West Bengal, Orissa, Bihar and Assam, with a total of only 13.1% of the population living in urban areas, 42% of that urban population lived in the Calcutta Metropolitan District. It is not surprising, therefore, 83% of the people registered as working in factories in the four states (588,000) were working in the four districts of Howrah, Hooghly, 24 Parganas, and Calcutta. And of the total industrial income of West Bengal, no less than 78.7% was derived from the southeastern region centered around Howrah and Calcutta.[30]

It is not surprising that a number of critics have focused in on this massive imbalance in urbanization as a focal point of criticism of Indian economic development.[31]

A second contributing effect to urbanization in India generally, and again perhaps to Calcutta in particular, has been that of the historic emergence of the transport system. Based mainly on the main trunk roads developed in Mughal and British times, and then with railways, the system in Eastern India, as in most of the rest of the country, has thus tended to polarize the effects of industrialization because of this road and rail concentration with main routes leading only to the few main cities. The branch railway line, as Holmstrom and Wellington[32] have argued, "differs fundamentally from those of main lines," as its main goal is to feed into the main line, polarizing development into the main cities. The 'spread effect,' to use Myrdal's terminology,[33] is therefore limited, and in India less than 25% of funds appropriated for public roads in the first three plans were spent on farm-to-market or other rural networks.[34]

It is not surprising that little attention was paid until the 1960's in India to regional development and that not until then was it remembered that the crucial element of "national development strategies" is the requirement of "sub-aggregation along regional lines."[35]

But in the last few years there has been both the recognition of the importance of regional growth strategies and the emphasis on "rurbanization." The idea of rurbanization being the "multiplication of small agro-towns [that] will stimulate commercial farming, modernize agricultural methods and practices."[36]

This policy has in effect been the aim of urban decentralization in West Bengal since the announcement in August, 1971, of Mrs. Gandhi's sixteen-point plan for development of the region (see Appendix IV). Covering not only the development of the Calcutta metropolitan region, it set a target of 2,000 small-scale industrial units to be set up yearly in West Bengal and a list of incentives to revive outside interest in investment in Calcutta that had lagged so badly with the political troubles of 1969-71. The scheme was further augmented in November 1971, when the central government issued an entirely new list of incentives for the state patterned on those already in practice very successfully in Maharastra and other Indian states.

Funding was increased in the last year of the State's Fourth Plan (1969-73) by 84 crores, giving a total outlay in this Fourth Plan period of Rs. 900 million crores, and the state government in 1972 raised by a special tax on luxury items such as refrigerators, cabaret shows, etc., a further Rs. 100 crores for regional development.

Perhaps more promising are the plans announced in October, 1972, for West Bengal's Fifth Plan. With a much larger outlay, one of the main aims is rurbanization on a large scale, with the major part of the planned total going toward agricultural development, power and rural electrification. Another aim announced in the plan is to provide an urban servicing and industrial center to be set up within five kilometres of each village, and a primary education center and health center for each cluster of 15 villages. As to electrification, it is anticipated that each village will have power supplies within ten years.[37]

And perhaps most important is the building of all-weather roads to all villages with populations of more than 1500 people. For the lack of roads is perhaps the greatest handicap to a productive economy, leading to both physical and mental isolation.[38]

The result of the programs already in progress and those planned in the Fifth Plan period will, if even carried out to any reasonable extent, have the vital effect of taking some of the immense pressure off Calcutta as the primary town in the region. It will not lead to the replacement of Calcutta and Haldia as the only available ports in Eastern India, but it will hopefully relieve some of the intense pressure on Calcutta's facilities and allow concentration on its main function as a port and capital-raising center as well as a manufacturing one.

However, rurbanization is only one aspect of the economic growth of the eastern region, and both the critical rate of unemployment in West Bengal and the whole new set of relations that have emerged with the creation of Bangladesh will have a marked effect on Calcutta's future.

Figures for unemployment vary considerably from the usually quoted 2.8 million to somewhere in the region of 5 million for the state as a whole and 1 million for Calcutta alone.[39] But even taken at its lowest level, unemployment, whether it is educated unemployment (estimated at some 220,000) or general, is a crucial problem. Both the central government and the state government are well aware of this. At the national level, the whole impetus of the Fifth Plan is directed toward raising the poverty level, reaching a guaranteed minimum wage,

and meeting the growing unemployment pool.[40] At the state level, the West Bengal government has placed unemployment as its foremost priority.

But only one person recently, the P.C.C. General Secretary, Mr. Priyaranjan Das Munshi, has come up with hard estimates of how much funding two million jobs would entail. His calculation that to find jobs to this extent would involve industrial investment of some Rs. 1400 crores in five years has, not surprisingly, aroused reaction.[41] For at the moment, the present Congress government, which has appreciably raised the level of incoming investment to Calcutta in the last two years, still has only reached a 330 crore figure, and there is little likelihood of achieving the 1400 crore figure in the next few years.

The problem has been accentuated by the emphasis on giving "locals" preference to jobs in Calcutta. And the growing localism that can be found is already affecting industry in Calcutta and is making itself felt throughout other areas of the eastern region, such as Assam and Orissa.[42]

Added to the unemployment problem that is perhaps the major factor in the stable and planned growth of West Bengal, there are the problems associated with the creation of Bangladesh. For economically the anticipated mutually beneficial set of relationships set up with Bangladesh in 1972 have far from fulfilled their promise. Part of this is undoubtedly due to the still chaotic transportation situation in Bangladesh and Bangladesh's wish to find other markets for their goods.[43] Under the limited payment agreement between India and Bangladesh due to expire last month (and now extended for a further six months), only some 6.2 crores of Indian exports and some 2.1 crores of imports were exchanged of the anticipated 25 crores two-way flow. This has led to recriminations on both sides and the accusation, among others, that Bangladesh is holding out on its contracted jute exports in an attempt to force India to buy the jute in foreign exchange at the rising market price. For as a result of Bangladesh's failure to deliver the contracted Rs. 7.5 crores of jute at Rs. 54 a maund, the free market price in Calcutta by January 12th this year was running at Rs. 64 a maund.[44]

The exact implications of the existence of Bangladesh, both economic and political, have still to be worked out. But there is no doubt in Indian minds that relations with Bangladesh must be taken into account when planning for the eastern region and, as such, relations both economic and political are of prime importance to the future well-being of the eastern region.[45]

Economically, therefore, Calcutta and West Bengal have taken a number of steps that should lessen the intense pressure on Calcutta by the deliberate policy of rurbanization and by economc development of the hinterland. If these work out to any reasonable extent in the Fifth Plan period, they will certainly help with the redevelopment of the Calcutta Metropolitan District and allow Calcutta to concentrate on redeveloping its now overly congested core areas.

But in the long run the political factor still remains the crucial one. And much depends on the ability of the present New Congress, or future alternative governments, to keep stability both in Calcutta and in West Bengal. The 1972 New Congress party victory was a massive one, as is shown in the following table, for it not only increased its overall percentage of votes from the 1971 figure of 29.8% to 49.1%, but gained control of 216 seats out of the total of 280.

WEST BENGAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
ELECTION RESULTS, 1969, 1971, and 1972

Party	1969 % Votes	1969 Seats	1971 % Votes	1971 Seats	1972 %Votes	1972 Seats
New Congress	40.4	55	29.8	105	49.1	216
Old Congress	split in late 1969		5.9	2	1.4	2
Bangla Congress	8.0	33	5.5	5	merged w/New Congress	
CPI	6.8	30	8.6	13	8.4	35
CPM	19.6	80	33.8	111	27.5	14
Forward Bloc	5.4	21	3.7	3	2.7	0
Others[a]	19.8	61	12.7	38	10.9	13
TOTALS	100.0	280	100.0	277[b]	100.0	280

[a] "Others" includes the Forward Bloc (Marxist), Socialist Unity Centre, Revolutionary Socialist Party, Revolutionary Communist Party of India, Bolshevik Party, Worker's Party, Biplabi Bangla Congress, Praja Socialist Party, Sumyukta Socialist Party, Lok Sevak Sangh, Gurkha League, Muslim League, Jana Sangh, and Swatantra Party.

[b] Three elections in 1971 were cancelled because of the deaths of candidates.

Source: Constituency Data Sheets, Press Information Bureau of India.

Such a massive victory grave hope that for some years after the turmoil of the previous years there might be some peace and stability. The new ministry, which had achieved the election victory primarily due to the help of the formerly split Bangla Party and the alliance of the CPI, as well as of the youth cadre attracted to it from the CPI(M) and the Naxalites, seemed to have every promise of achieving some success in dealing with what has been described as "an administration that is politically corrupt throughout, the greater portion of it being mired in studies apathy and indifference to the obligations of service, and in which contempt for discipline and the law is the rewarded norm rather than the punished exception.[46]

Headed by Siddartha Ray, former Union Minister for West Bengal in the Central Cabinet, it was assured of Delhi's support, and from the beginning the Chief Minister was well aware of both the problems he faced and the times within which he had to deal with these. Just after the March, 1972, election, he stated these clearly and has constantly repeated the same theme ever since:

> We do not have all the time in the world ... maybe we have only three or four years to show concrete results. If we fail, whether because of the mistakes of the government or business or industry, or because any one section is more concerned about their rights than those of others, we will all topple together -- not any one section, but the entire country.[47]

But his ministry soon ran into trouble on two fronts, that of internal factionalism and that of the general economic situation, the massive unemployment accentuated by the worst drought in fifty years, followed by massive floods affecting an area of over 30,000 square miles and an estimated 20.5 million population. Actual expenditure on drought relief alone, set at Rs. 30 million in 1972-73, grew into Rs. 230 million in the first ten months of his office.[48]

Internal factionalism began to haunt the New Congress almost as soon as the election was over. Essentially between the two rival youth wings of the party, the Congress Chhatra Parishad, led by Subrata Mukherji, the factionalism was a major source of internal dissention in the New Congress party until the PCC elections last December. An open rift at that time was only just avoided, due mainly to Chief Minister Ray's personal efforts, and those of Mrs. Indira Gandhi, who met both sides during the All-India Congress sessions at Salt Lake in December. With the transfer of Priyaranjan Das Munshi to his All-India Youth Congress post and his subsequent resignation of his state post, matters for the moment have settled down.

A further factor in this decline in factionalism could well be due to the acceptance by both rival sides of the fact of Ray's leadership and the lack of anyone to replace him at the present time. Another help has been the split within Chhatra Parishad itself, with the new "rump" group under Sudhin Bhattacharya disowning any opposition to Ray's leadership[49] or ministry.

But the factionalism of the first ten months did a great deal of harm, both in holding back implementation of government development plans and in taking the political struggle into the economic sphere.

For the six months preceding the vital PCC meeting in December, 1972, it was quite clear that the various ministers were more interested in internal politics than in carrying out their government assignments. In particular, with the CPM in full flight after the election, the field was left open to the New Congress to move into the trade unions. Subratra Mukherji, despite also being Minister for Home Affairs, alone held the presidency of some score of trade unions, and it became the case "of not just ... the industrial units being physically disturbed because of the influx of musclemen; the state of mind of the workers at large [was] also about equally affecting the pace of production.[50]

On the other hand, the New Congress Ministry, apart from its help in funding the Calcutta Metropolitan Authority and giving full-scale support to its efforts, also managed to get rid of the archaic and corrupt Calcutta Municipal Corporation, whose chairman admitted on its demise that "the Corporation had done worse than nothing in any sphere whatsoever since Independence.[51] In addition, the Labour Department in recent months had made considerable progress in working out some 22 tripartite agreements between labor, management, and government that augur well for industrial peace in the future in the state.[52]

But the major problem of the Ray government has been unemployment, and particularly that of educated unemployment. With an estimated 220,000 educated unemployed on the market today, the hidden magnitude of the problem can be seen in the fact that ready to add to this figure are some 300,000 undergraduate and post-graduate students in Calcutta who have been unable to take their final examinations due to the breakdown of the examination system by mass co-opting and by the actual closure of the universities in recent years.[53] Inevitably, the admission procedures have been delayed as a result, and potentially the educated unemployed figure is growing at an alarming rate.[54] And for all the statements of both the Central and of Ray's state government concerning their plans to deal with this potentially disrupting force, this is the major challenge to peaceful political and economic development in India in the next few years.

Apart from the internal problems of the New State Government, two other major factors exist that could easily lead to a renewal of major political unrest. The first is the still existent elite threat. For all the valedictions that met the Naxalite movement with the death of Charu Mazumdar last July, few see it entirely as a written-off movement. It was interesting that in interviews in Calcutta with both Mr. Siddartha Ray and the West Bengal Inspector General of Police, the emphasis in both cases was on the possibility of future Naxalite action if the government did not take strong positive steps (and so far, it has not) to deal with the unemployment situation. Recently, there have been any number of Naxalite arrests and reports indicating Chinese funding coming to so-called Naxalite elements in West Bengal, Bihar and in Nepal.[55] And there is no doubt that once the first flush of victory starts to wane and little or nothing effective is done to alleviate unemployment, particularly among the educated, Naxalism could once again emerge as an attractive alternative to either the New Congress party's policies or to those of the CPI(M).

A final point, but one of growing importance that affects West Bengal as well as the states of its hinterland, in particular Assam, is growing localism. In West Bengal, it is already becoming a cause of economic tension[56] and now that localism as a policy has been adopted by the CPI(M), it is threatening to become a major force in events in Eastern India. The recent prolonged disturbances in Assam over the language policy[57] and the Chief Minister's rough reception in Darjeeling on a recent visit[58] are both aspects of a much larger problem that has, in recent months, caused a major crisis in Andhra Pradesh and can be seen also in Tamil Nadu's demands for independence from the center and in the Shiv Sena's recent mayoral election victory in Bombay.

A major element in this growing localism has been the migration both of Biharis or non-Bengalis from Bangladesh into West Bengal and into Assam.[59] In

Assam, this has already led to widescale violence and the situation is far from being settled. The border controls have now been tightened up, but even in the last few months there is evidence that the influx, though not so great, is continuing.

This migration problem and the localism accentuated by the physical presence of Bangladesh along West Bengal's eastern frontier brings into play one of the most important factors in trying to assess the possibility of political stability in West Bengal in the future. It is still difficult to assess, and one wonders if the Indian government itself has a clear idea,[60] what effect Bangladesh is likely to have on India's security in the Eastern Sector, and on West Bengal and the surrounding Indian states in particular.

It is clear that Bangladesh is seeking greater independence of India as time goes on, and it is a policy that could well cause some apprehension to India if the long talked of Chinese alignment, anticipated by some, ever takes place.

As to West Bengal, Bangladesh is certainly not providing the anticipated market, particulary for jute, that was at first anticipated, although this could well be due to Bangladesh's own internal transport problems.[61] But at the moment, thanks to Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's massive election victory in March and the lack of any coherent opposition, there does not seem to be any immediate likelihood of extremists seizing control in Bangladesh. But it must be remembered that it was the policy of the CP (M-L) in 1971 to see the "struggle in West Bengal" spill over into what was then East Pakistan and the expressed hope that the two struggles in both Bengals "will become one."[62] And Franda has pointed out the attraction to many of the East Bengal communities of the West Bengal Naxalite movement was due to their own weaknesses since Independence.[63] And although Sheikh Mujibur's recent election victory would seem to indicate the stability and primacy of his essentially right-wing government for the near future, a sudden change in leadership could lead to a more extreme government, with some of the implications spelled out by General Kaul in an article in 1971: "Once leadership in East Bengal passes to the extremists' hands, as is already happening, East and West Bengal, inspired by China, may become an enlarged Bangladesh. China would then wield great influence in these two regions.[64]

E. CONCLUSION

It has been the underlying basis of the argument of this paper that there is beginning to appear a new and promising trend in Indian planning, involving primarily the throwing off of wholesale Western concepts and legacies and the attempt to deal with the problems both at the national level and at the regional or city level, based on Indian conditions and social and cultural values.

This is by no means a complete revolution. For there are still many elements in Indian planning today that are hidebound by colonial tradition. Among these is the still outdated relationship between engineers and architects and the tendency is to think in what has been termed 'grandeloquent' terms.

No one, in a sense, has been more to blame for this than Nehru and Corbusier, for Chandigarh still has a fatal attraction to planners in India today. Grand though the scheme is, it is, as Correa among others has pointed out, unsuitable in many ways for the Indian conditions. Apart from "the dust catching brise-soleil, the medieval segregation of social classes and the appalling lack of public transport,[65] Corbusier ignored the social customs of the society in which he was working -- the Punjabi habit, for instance, of sleeping outside, with the result that Chandigarg is a hot, unsociable city with bare and empty streets.

And one wonders whether Chandigarg has taught any lessons and it is not just one more of those monumental happenings that have occurred throughout Indian history, such as Mandu, Fatepur-Sikri, Agra and others.

The answer lies perhaps in Nehru's remark quoted earlier: "The significant thing about Chandigarh is not the fact you like it but that it has made you aware that modern architecture exists." And in this sense Chandigarh began the process of waking the Indian mind up to the unique set of social and economic conditions, climate, living habits, and building materials that exist in India to create a truly Indian answer to architectural and planning problems.

On the one hand, there is the ability, and in a country of India's size and population this is an indispensable asset (for all the extravaganzas that it at times leads to), to plan on a massive scale. National planning in India today can now be seen at this level, and projects such as the new Bombay Twin City Project, and the rebuilding of a national water grid of which the giant 2665 km long Ganga-Cavuery canal is a part, are symptoms of this.

On the other hand, the growing emphasis on the human factor in planning[66] and the emphasis on low-cost housing schemes and slum improvements[67] are perhaps the most promising way to solve India's massive overurbanization problems.

We have seen from the examination of the Calcutta Metropolitan Plan that the emphasis is on maintenance and on the renewal of slum or bustee areas in Calcutta, rather than in any attempt to literally sweep them away under the bulldozer that has been the common practice until recently in developing countries. And it is interesting to note that both in this plan prepared in the early 1960's and in the many publications of the New Calcutta Metropolitan Development Authority we find mention of the need to work with the Indian conditions and Indian ethos and not to just adapt wholesale Western ideas.

Colin Rosser has argued forceably that the traditional concepts on which urban housing policies have been based are no answer to the problems of low-income housing in developing countries -- that what is required is a realistic approach that recognizes that within the bustees (which provide already the only housing that the inhabitants can afford) the answer lies, an answer of guided self-improvement.[68]

And from this flows the broader realization -- the concept of the city as a focus of urban social change and not as an obstacle to economic change, the view that "developing nations are already overurbanized, burdened with festering

cities beyond their capacity to support.[69] Over twenty years ago, Karl Mannheim suggested that planners concentrate on what he termed the principal media or the structural forces within a society, and by planning intervene and guide social change.[70] In this context, and it is one becoming more and more accepted by planners in developing countries, cities are a major force for national development and not just a set of economic and social problems.

And with this has grown the realization that Western thought, whether it is that of outside experts or of Indians imbued with English tradition, has been overburdened by a Western concept of time. As John G. Gunnell puts it:

> Development as a mode of thought involves the emergence of an orientation toward time and change which has found its paradigmatic expression in modern Western society. In general, this means a focus where society as well as the life of the individual is perceived as moving along a unilinear plane from the past, through the present and toward the future, and where the future is understood not only as a dimension of existence and a boundary of life, but as an object of intentional action which can be anticipated, appropriated, controlled, and made to conform to goals devised in the present. Here the future is something to be planned and actualized by consciously innovative and creative action.[71]

In India there is still the presence of this unilinear concept of time that can be seen in the frustrations of the planners and of the general public in the clash between the peculiarly Indian rhythm of life and the need for rapid development. But in this growing awareness of the differences between cultures reflected in attitudes toward planning, I would argue that there is more hope than pessimism for Indian planning in general, and in Calcutta in particular, for the future.

Both the first, and the most massive program of development in India, the Basic Development Plan is now at last underway, and for all the critics that write it off so easily, I would argue that the basic planning and now its implementation are both realistic and possible. And, given an even chance to continue without political disruption, there is a 'future' for Calcutta.

FOOTNOTES

1. Concluding Statement, International Planning Seminar on the Calcutta Metropolitan Plan, January 8 - 15, 1967, p. 1.

2. Quoted in *Basic Development Plan, Calcutta Metropolitan District, 1966-1986*, Calcutta Metropolitan Planning Organization, Government of West Bengal, p. IX.

3. Mulk Raj Anand, "India Today," *The Architectural Review* (London) (December 1971), Vol. CL, No. 198, p. 392.

4. The Calcutta Metropolitan District includes both Calcutta and its surroundings and comprises 532.87 square miles, as against the 39.75 square miles of the Calcutta city area proper. The relative 1971 populations were 8.3 and 3.1 million. See footnote 5 for the basis of these population figures and Appendix I for a map delineating the district and city boundaries.

5. K. Biswas, *A Memorandum on a Perspective Plan for Calcutta Metropolitan District and West Bengal, 1971-89*. Calcutta Metropolitan Planning Organization, Government of West Bengal, August, 1971, p. 6. The figures quoted here and throughout this paper are those given in the publications of the Calcutta Metropolitan Planning Organization and the Calcutta Metropolitan Development Authority. They vary slightly from the 1971 Census figures, which are only just beginning to be published, and provide a more consistent figure for the purposes of this paper than do the few figures so far released from the 1971 Census. Sources are given for figures quoted from documents other than these.

6. *Basic Development Plan, op. cit.*, p. 32.

7. Biswas, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

8. Among others, the new Twin City Project in Bombay, the master plans for Kargan and Ajmer, the Rapid Transit Systems for Calcutta, Delhi, Madras and Bombay, the Yamuna Canal Project in Haryama, and the total rebuilding of Eastern and Central India's waterway systems envisaged in the Ganga-Cavuery Canal scheme.

9. Most of the material and sources quoted in the succeeding pages was collected on two field trips to Calcutta in the summers of 1971 and 1972. I am grateful to Kalyan Biswas, the then director of the Calcutta Metropolitan Planning Organization, and his planning staff, and to the Director and staff of the Calcutta Metropolitan Authority, and in particular to Dr. Debes Mookerjea, consultant to that body. I am also grateful for the facilities and interviews arranged for me in July and August, 1972, by the Government of India in general and in Calcutta in particular, whose guest I was at that period.

10. *Basic Development Plan, op. cit.*, p. 14.

11. *Report on the Census of Calcutta, 1876.*

12. Projected figure quoted from K. Biswas, *A Memorandum, op. cit.* The provisional 1971 census figures are slightly at variance with a figure of 7,031,000 (see *Pocket Book of Population Statistics, Census Centenary 1972*: New Delhi). Until we see the full figures it is difficult to discern if there has been a decline or whether the 1971 census figure covers a different area than does the Calcutta Metropolitan District, on which the 8.5 million figure is based.

13. It is not surprising that Calcutta with its hinterland has been called 'the Ruhr of India,' as the *Basic Development Plan* puts it (p. 2). "The blast furnaces, open-hearth furnaces, coke ovens, bar and rolling mills, of Jamshedpur, Rourkela, Burnpur, Durgapur, Asansol and Rawlhi -- and the great heavy engineering and locomotive works of Ranchi, Chittaranjan, and of Calcutta and Howrah and their neighboring towns along the Hooghly -- provide by far the major foundations of India's industrial progress. Within a radius of less than 300 miles, and within a relatively narrow arc west to northwest of Calcutta, is concentrated almost the whole of India's iron and steel industry."

14. *Census of India 1961*, Vol. 1, Part II. A(i).

15. K. Biswas, *Reorganization of the Metropolitan Administrative Structure in the CMD -- A Proposal for Immediate Action*, Calcutta Metropolitan Planning Organization, Government of West Bengal, July, 1972, p. 3.

16. K. Biswas, *A Memorandum, op. cit.*, p. 6.

17. This came as some surprise to me, as having spent the last two summers in Calcutta there seemed to me few times in the monsoon season when excessive flooding closed sections of the city. But the emphasis placed on this fact by the Secretary of the Calcutta Metropolitan Development Authority, Mr. K. C. Sivaramakrishnan, at a recent talk at M.I.T. confirmed this annual phenomenon

18. *Basic Development Plan, op. cit.*, p. 7.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

20. The distinction between architects and engineers with higher status still going to the engineers is an heritage from colonial times that is still causing unnecessary rivalry in India today. See J. M. Richards, *India Today*, p. 328.

21. The Indian Institute of Architecture celebrated its golden jubilee in 1967. At present there are fifteen schools of architecture.

22. The phrase 'Nehru's Chandigarh, belongs to Charles Correa, the Bombay architect who is one of the foremost members of the new movement in Indian architecture and planning.

23. Pandit Nehru quoted in *India Today, op. cit.*, p. 327.

24. K. C. Sivaramakrishnan, *Organizing a Metropolitan Development Programme: The Calcutta Case*. Calcutta, July, 1972.

25. In addition, central government loans to Calcutta such as a Rs. 2.5 crore loan from Housing and Urban Development Corporation, New Delhi, for housing, announced in November, 1972, are swelling the incoming flow of money. See *Times of India*, November 14, 1972.

26. Funding of Rs. 34 crores was originally provided in the Fourth Fifth Year Plan and the rest will be allocated in the Fifth Plan.

27. The first sections are scheduled for completion in the late 1970's, with 17 stations. They will run through the central business part of the city.

28. Already the Farakkah Barrage has raised the water level in the Ganga by 15 feet. See *Times of India*, February 11, 1973.

29. *Times of India*, February 22, 1973.

30. *Basic Development Plan*, p. 23.

31. See John Lewis, *Quiet Crisis in India: Economic Development and American Policy*, Washington, D. C.: Brookings Institute, 1962, and E. A. J. Johnson, *Market Towns and Spatial Development in India*, New Delhi: National Council of Applied Research, 1965.

32. J. Edwin Holmstrom, *Railways and Roads in Pioneer Development Overseas: A Study of Their Comparative Economics*, London, 1934; and A. M. Wellington, *The Economic Theory of the Location of Railways*, New York, 1914.

33. Gunnar Myrdal, *Economic Theory and Underdeveloped Regions*, London, 1957, pp. 31-32.

34. E. A. J. Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 149.

35. John Friedmann, *Regional Development Policy: A Case Study of Venezuela*, Cambridge, MA, 1966, p. 3.

36. 'Rurbanization" is a phrase that began to be used in the late 1960's. "Rurbanization ... will adjust caste and occupations -- primary, manufacturing, and tertiary -- to the new social milieu. Extension and welfare services from city and 'rurban' centers will stir new ambitions and introduce new patterns of living and culture; there will be a fresh synthesis of the values of modern science and technology with those of a predominantly rural civilization." See *Regional Perspective of Industrial and Urban Growth*, ed. P. B. Desai, I. M. Grossack, and K. N. Sharma, Bombay, 1969, pp. 386-392.

37. *Times of India*, October 23, 1972, p. 8. Hopefully this electrification will be primarily used in production rather than in home consumption. Until recently, household consumption in India amounted to 70% of the output. See National Council of Applied Economic Research, *Demand for Energy in India, 1960-1975*, New Delhi, 1960, p. 8.

38. The importance of communication has been illustrated in a number of studies, but none more pertinent than that carried out in 1966 on a village only 23 miles from Allahabad. The aim of the survey was to find out what the occupational groups in the village knew about India's development and planning procedure. The result was "a shocking degree of ignorance, indifference and psychological blackout." See A. N. Agarwala, *et. al.*, *Plan Consciousness in a Rural Area: A Survey of Dhatarpur Village*, University of Allahabad, Agro-Economic Research Center, Allahabad, 1966.

39. *Times of India*, January 17, 1973.

40. *Times of India*, May 30, 1972.

41. *Times of India*, August 27, 1972. In an interview I had with the Chief Minister Mr. Siddhartha Ray last August (1972), he emphasized that he not only saw unemployment as the major task facing his ministry but felt that unless he "came up with a solution within two or three years," he and his party "would be out of power." He also emphasized the greatly increased outside investment figure which at the time of the interview he quoted as Rs. 310 crores.

42. The issue of localism which is becoming such a powerful factor in India today can be seen in discriminatory law practices in nearly all states in India, including the recent Mukti incidents in Andhra Pradesh. See "The Impact of Law on Internal Migration in India," C. MacAndrews, M. I. T., January, 1973, mimeo. Also Myron Weiner, "The Socio-Political Consequences of Interstate migration in India," M. I. T., 1972, mimeo.

43. In a number of interviews I had with ministers and government officials in various ministries, including the Planning Department in August, 1972, it was made clear that Bangladesh primarily sought exports to foreign countries with payment in foreign exchange. Thus the large sale of jute to China in the spring of 1972 was pointed out (this was before the Chinese United Nations veto on Bangladesh's UN entry) as being a pointer for future trade development.

44. *Times of India*, January 12, 1973, p. 7.

45. The Calcutta Metropolitan Planning Organization has already taken Bangladesh to be part of its general planning area for eastern India. This was clear when I paid a series of visits there last August and is anticipated in *A Memorandum on a Perspective Plan for the Calcutta Metropolitan District and West Bengal*, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

46. Marcus Franda, "Calcutta and the New Congress Government," *Fieldstaff Reports*, Vol. SVII, No. I, January, 1973, p. 7.

47. *Times of India*, March 26, 1972.

48. *Overseas Hindustan Times*, Thursday, March 1, 1973, p. 10.

49. Union Minister Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya was the favorite of the radical groups for the Chief Ministership immediately after the elections. But it is open to question whether he would have wanted to leave his more central and potentially more powerful position to move to West Bengal, even if he had been chosen. See Overseas Hindustan Times, September 22, 1972, p. 11.

50. *Economic and Political Weekly of Bombay*, Special Edition, August, 1972, p. 1466.

51. Franda, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

52. One often overlooked aspect of the interrelationship of political and economic unrest in West Bengal is the fact that in recent years it has been economic recession rather than workers' strikes that has caused shutdowns and walkouts. See *Overseas Hindustan Times*, April 5, 1973, p. 5.

53. *Overseas Hindustan Times*, March 1, 1973, p. 11. Also, *Educated Unemployment in India*, Committee on Education and Total Employment, New Delhi, 1972.

54. Research carried out by the author when the guest of the Indian Government in July and August of last year. The insistence of a strict police escort on a visit to Santinekatan only emphasized this still potential danger.

55. *Times of India*, January 12, 1973.

56. Emphasis on the employment of 'locals' only is now a frequent demand in labor disputes. See *Times of India*, July 27, 1972.

57. *Times of India*, December 27, 1972.

58. *Times of India*, January 12, 1973.

59. *Times of India*, April 9, 1972.

60. Interviews in both Bangladesh, West Bengal and Delhi last summer brought home the fluctuation in Indian thinking from all-out support of Bangladesh to that of a certain wariness. The constant delay in getting Bangladesh's agreement to the release of the Pakistan prisoners of war and Huksa's constant trips to Bangladesh over the last year all demonstrate the growing difficulties in the relationship, as does the real anti-Indian feeling felt both at the popular level and in government in Bangladesh.

61. Sumanta Banerjee, "Maoists: Doing Without China?," *Economic and Political Weekly*, VI, No. 27 (July 3, 1971), 1321.

62. *Ibid.*

63. Marcus F. Franda, "Communism and Regional Politics in East Pakistan," *Asian Survey*, X, No. 7 (July, 1970), 606.

64. *Deccan Chronicle* (Bangalore), July 13, 1971.

65. Correa, *op. cit.*, p. 329.

66. A conference of Indian and International Planners was held in New Delhi from January 22-24, 1973 on "The Human Factor in City Planning."

67. Apart from the 'bustee' scheme in Calcutta. Ford consultants there have developed an innovative answer to low-cost housing in UCOPAN. A durable, cheap and rapidly constructable means of housing, it is being used extensively in India and Nepal, as well as in health centers and schools in the Calcutta region.

68. Colin Rosser, "Housing for the Lowest Income Groups: The Calcutta Experience," *Ekistics*, 183 (February, 1971), pp. 126-130. Rosser was a Ford consultant to the Calcutta Metropolitan Planning Organization.

69. William McCord, "Portrait of Transitional Man," in I. H. Horowitz, ed., *The New Sociology: Essays in Social Science and Social Theory in Honor of C. Wright Mills*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1964, p. 430.

70. Karl Mannheim, *Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction*, New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1949, pp. 174-196.

71. John G. Gunnell, "Time and the Concept of Development," *CAG Occasional Papers*, Bloomington, Indiana (April, 1966), pp. 35-36.

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